

The Modern Language Journal

Published by the National Federation of Modern
Language Teachers

TABLE OF CONTENTS VOLUME V

OCTOBER TO MAY—1920-1921

Prof. H. P. Thime

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3-20-1923

The Modern Language Journal

CONTENTS

GOOD AND BAD REASONS FOR STUDYING MODERN LANGUAGES IN SCHOOL, CALVIN THOMAS.....	1
OUR THREEFOLD NEEDS, E. C. HILLS.....	12
ON THE TEACHING OF GERMAN, ROBERT H. FIFE, JR.	18
L'ÉVOLUTION RÉCENTE DES UNIVERSITÉS FRAN- ÇAISES, FRANCK L. SCHOELL.....	28
THE REAL KNOWLEDGE OF A FOREIGN COUNTRY, LILIAN L. STROEBE.....	38
EDITORIAL COMMENT.....	45
NOTES AND NEWS.....	50
REVIEWS.....	57

Entered as second-class matter April 26, 1920, under Act of March 3rd, 1879, at the postoffice at Menasha, Wis. Acceptance for mailing at the special rate of postage provided in Section 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized September 24, 1918.

The Modern Language Journal is published monthly from October to May inclusive by the National Federation of Modern Language Teachers.

The subscription price is \$2.00 a year; 30 cents a single copy; postage free.

Communications for the editors and manuscripts should be addressed to A. Coleman, Managing Editor, University of Chicago, Chicago, Ill.

All business letters and subscriptions should be addressed to E. L. C. Morse, Business Manager, 7650 Saginaw Ave., Chicago, Ill.

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Published by

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The Modern Language Journal

VOLUME V

OCTOBER, 1920

No. 1

GOOD AND BAD REASONS FOR STUDYING MODERN LANGUAGES IN SCHOOL¹

By CALVIN THOMAS

MY TOPIC can be put in the form of a question thus: Given a boy or girl who has come along in his school course to the time when he must decide whether to begin the study of a foreign language, and if so which one—how can we guide the youngster to a wise decision? By a wise decision I mean one which will prevent him from wasting his time.

Some may think, perhaps, that this question is unimportant. They will say, "Oh, let the youngsters choose as it happens. Their time is worth nothing and *any* language taught in the schools is worth studying. The study of it will certainly do no harm even if the knowledge gained is never afterwards turned to account. So let the boy or girl follow his whim, experiment, and find out by the process of trial and error where his aptitudes lie."

Now I have some sympathy with this general attitude, for I believe that liberty is a good thing for everybody, but I can not assent to the doctrine that it makes no difference what the young folk study in school. In these days there are so many good-for-something studies that it seems a pity to spend much time over studies that almost certainly will prove good for nothing. We should prevent that, if we can, by wise guidance at the outset. Yet the steering is a delicate matter and must be managed with discretion. I should not wish to advocate any plan of guidance that might work out in such a way, say, that a capable boy would

¹ This was one of the last papers prepared by Professor Thomas before his death. He was to have read it before a meeting of the N. Y. State M. L. A.

Prof. N. C. Thomas, 2-6-23, g

be steered away from Greek by an adviser unacquainted with Greek and hence ignorant of its potential benefits. We must be on our guard against that sort of guidance.

But perhaps an objector may say, Why take any risk? What is the reason for doing anything at all?

Well, the reason is that, as things have been going, the time spent on language-study in school is very largely wasted. I do not say that it is *always* wasted—not by any means. I wish to speak very temperately and to avoid all loose exaggeration. And speaking very temperately I say that the time spent on language study in school is very largely wasted.

What are the facts in a typical case? A schoolboy takes up, let us suppose, the study of French. In the course of a few weeks he has acquired a pronunciation which is almost invariably bad. He writes the prescribed exercises that he may fix in mind the rudiments of the grammar. He gets a little colloquial practise—so called conversation—if his teacher is minded that way, but he does not learn, and in the classroom can not learn, to speak French in any but a Pickwickian sense. If his teacher is *not* a votary of the so-called natural, or direct, method, he gets no colloquial practise at all. He reads a little French literature—stories, poems, plays, historical sketches, etc.—and learns to translate it after a fashion. In time he finishes his curriculum—perhaps with high marks—graduates and goes to work. In his work he finds that he has no use for French. He never meets a French person who can not speak English. He has no occasion to write French letters. He has not acquired sufficient interest in French literature so that he is moved to read books and journals in the French language. The consequence is that his knowledge of French soon begins to fade away. In two or three years it is almost as if he had never studied it at all.

I do not forget, let me say again, that the results of schooling do not *always* work out in this way. Some of those who study French in school do afterwards turn it to account. Those who do are teachers, scholars, writers, men of science, persons who live abroad more or less, and here and there a man who has business relations with Frenchmen. All told these foot up, perhaps, one-twentieth of all those who study French in school. Of course the proportion is greater in some parts of the country than in others—

greater in New York or New Orleans, for example, than in Tennessee or Oklahoma. Perhaps my estimate is too small. It may be, taking the country as a whole, that the fraction is ten per cent, instead of five. But even so, there is an overwhelming majority of those who, after studying French some little time, never afterwards make any use of it. The only possible conclusion, it seems to me, is that this large contingent of "educated" youth were ill advised when they began the study of French. They should not have begun it at all. It would have been better for them to put in their time on something else.

Hence my question: Can we in any way prevent this army of boys and girls from setting out after a vaguely conceived object of pursuit which they are destined never to capture and which would be of no use to them if they did capture it?

I have used French for illustration, but everything I have said is equally applicable to German or Spanish, to Latin or Greek. Nor is the case materially altered if the high-school graduate goes to college and there continues his language-study a little longer. That merely postpones the forgetting process. Sooner or later, however, that process gets in its inevitable work, because the language that has been studied does not function in the daily life of the person who has studied it.

I imagine that by this time some listener is mentally objecting that I overlook the far-famed disciplinary value, and the equally far-famed culture value, of language study. So it is necessary to say a word on those subjects.

The idea still prevails widely that it is well worth while to spend several years in the study of an important language, that is, a language deemed important because of some notable rôle played by the nation that speaks it, even if one never masters it and never afterwards makes any use of the knowledge acquired. The student is supposed to get a precious thing called discipline, or another precious thing called culture. I used to bank heavily on this doctrine myself. I see now, however, that it is largely fallacious and has been much overworked by various sorts of people with an ax to grind.

One of the solid results of recent psychological research is the proof that all training is special training. There is no such thing as mental discipline in the abstract. By appropriate exercises

you can train the memory, the will, the imagination, the attention, the power of application, the power of observation; you can train the ability to reason deductively from premises or inductively from observed facts. But there is no such thing as an all-around mental athlete, hence no kind of training that will produce one. The practical bearing of this discovery is that when disciplinary value is claimed for any subject the question at once arises, *What* faculty of the mind does it exercise? For *all* studies are disciplinary in one way or another and to a greater or less degree. A perfectly futile study has never been invented.

Now in the case of language-study the nature of the discipline afforded is plain and not subject to debate. Learning a new language is mainly memory-work. There is a little exercise for the power of application, but that comes from *any* subject that presents difficulties. There is likewise a little training for the power of observation of a certain order of facts, namely, linguistic facts. This kind of training is also incidental to nearly all studies. But I should say that nine-tenths of the work involved in learning a new language is memory-work pure and simple. One has simply got to memorize an immense mass of related and unrelated facts, and then practise until knowledge becomes second nature and the necessary motor reactions virtually automatic. That is all there is to it.

But, now, is it not a well-recognized fact that all our schooling, from the lowest grades thru college, is too much memory-work already? Its undue preponderance is often deplored by thoughtful schoolmen. We really need less of training for the memory and more training of other faculties which are on the whole of more importance in life. It is thus a mistake to keep a boy or girl year after year at the study of a language that is never going to be used, if and so far as it is done in the name of discipline. The discipline afforded is of minor importance at best. Such as it is, it can be had just as well from studies that will afterwards turn out to be good for something.

As for the culture-value of language-study, it again is almost negligible in the early stages. We must make a sharp distinction between learning a language and reading the literature to which the language may potentially become a key. (I say 'may become' because in the great majority of cases the 'key' never really unlocks

anything.) By 'culture' I mean that enlargement of the mental outlook which comes from reading and reflection. It is always a slow and gradual acquisition. Of course it may *begin* in school and college; and in the case of young people who have a strong bent for reading and reflection, the ripening and broadening effect of literary study may be very considerable. In fact, it may constitute, in individual cases, the very best part of one's schooling. But this value hardly begins to be realized while one is learning the language. It comes only when one has made sufficient progress so that reading is unattended by the sense of laborious effort or bondage to grammar and dictionary. It is only the exceptional student of a foreign language who ever reaches that point before graduation from college.

I come back now, after this digression on the subject of language-study in its relation to discipline and culture, to our fundamental question: How can we guide the youngster who has an important choice to make so that he will not waste years of school time in studying something that will never be of any use to him? Any use, that is, at all proportionate to the time he will be asked to spend? This matter of the ratio between time spent and results obtained is of course vital to the whole discussion. It must never be left out of sight for a moment. If the command of a language could be had for nothing, as indeed a limited command *can* be had in infancy, there would be nothing to debate. If school-children could pick up languages as they pick up popular songs, we should all say, Let them have a free rein. Whether they learn more or less of any particular language, or ever afterwards make use of their knowledge, does not matter, for it has cost them nothing.

But the command of a language can *not* be had for nothing. It costs time, labor and money. To learn to read a language easily presupposes a large amount of practise in reading. Fortunately this practise can be had by oneself under the study lamp. To learn to *speak* a language for any useful purpose presupposes an immense amount of practise in talking. The amount of practise required is vastly greater than can possibly be given in a school or college classroom, where the learners meet their teacher for a part of an hour three or four times a week. The practise required is practise in actual talking, i.e. in wagging one's own tung—not

in hearing some one else talk or in answering made-up questions put by a superior being seated on a raised platform. This practise, more's the pity, can *not* be had by oneself. One must have someone to talk with—someONE for the time being—just as the learner of tennis or chess must have some *one* to play with. All this means a considerable expenditure of time, effort, and resolution.

What we have to do, then, if possible, is to convey to the boy or girl who is in the way of deciding whether to begin the study of this or that foreign language, and also to the parents of such boy or girl, some inkling of the facts above set forth. He should be let into the secret that what he will learn in school will be of precious little use to him except as a foundation on which to build after schooldays are over. If it is a question of German, for example, he should be told that he will not learn to speak German in school—except to a very limited extent and in a style never heard outside the classroom. He should be told that, in order to command the language for any useful purpose whatever, he will have to devote a great deal of time to it after he has left school; and that whether it is wise and expedient to pay that price will depend entirely on the nature of the life that he is going to live. If he is going to live and do business among Germans unacquainted with English it will be well worth while for him to be able to speak German easily and correctly. If he is going to be a scholar it will be well worth while for him to be able to read German books and magazines. He should have presented to him, in language that he can understand, the solid reasons, such as experience has shown to be valid for studying German in school. And the same for Spanish, Latin, or any other language that may be up for consideration. Withal he should be gently cautioned against certain popular fallacies that befog this whole matter, and against certain much-used arguments that are specious and illusory.


Let me mention some of these illusory arguments which are often put forward as reasons for having this, that, or the other language taught and studied in our schools. And first there is the argument from ethnic prejudice or prepossession. I mean the notion that American schoolchildren whose parents are of some alien stock have some sort of right to be taught the language of that stock in our schools. Put in different words, the idea is that

English is after all only one of many languages used in this country, and that all should be on a par in proportion as the speakers of them pay taxes. It is urged that we are all immigrants, except the Indians, and that the claim of English to a dominant position rests on nothing but national vanity. This means that wherever there is a local preponderance of, say, Germans, or Swedes, or Czechs or Italians, they have a right to demand that German, or Swedish, or Czech, or Italian, be taught in the schools on a par with English—or at least that it be taught. This is urged, not in the interest of the rising generation, for whom a good command of English is the thing most necessary and desirable, but to gratify the ethnic sentiment of adults who do not want their children to lose touch with the culture of the old home.

Now it is my conviction that we ought to set our faces unflinchingly against this doctrine and make no concessions to it whatever. I believe I am as far as a man can be from the spirit of jingoism. On no account should I wish to see our country depart from its historic policy of hospitality to all men who love liberty. I recognize too that the alien immigrant has a good right to cherish his native tongue and the cultural associations of the old home. For him to do so is within limits creditable and praiseworthy. So far as *he* is concerned, I would deal gently with his prepossessions and avoid any measures that would tend to embitter him or create in him the sense of being persecuted.

But when we come to the children of the alien immigrant we must insist that *they* be educated first and foremost for American citizenship, which means that they must be educated in and thru the English language. Such a policy is necessary on broad grounds of national interest that far transcend and outweigh all petty considerations of individual sentiment. It is necessary to prevent this country from becoming Balkanized. The danger of that is real; we must organize against it and combat it. The word must go forth with emphasis that the language of this country and the vehicle of its civilization is, as it always has been, the English language and no other. All other languages are foreign languages. We need this teaching in order to make us and keep us a nation; to create a common basis of thought, of ideals and aspirations in our multifarious citizenry. We need it, as I have said elsewhere, *to kindle a fire under the melting-pot*. We must

proclaim to all the world that we recognize no obligation whatever to teach *any* foreign language in our schools, and that we recognize the very strongest obligation of all American children, of whatever ethnic stock, to learn the English language and to make *that* the main vehicle of their education.

 This is a problem to be solved by the Federal Government in co-operation with the states. I do not here undertake to discuss ways and means. I merely state my opinion that the proper course will be to make our public schools so good, by a vigorous use of the taxing power, that no parochial schools can stand the competition with them.

Again, it is often urged that a particular language be taught in our schools, and our children thus put in the way of studying it, because the nation that speaks the language is friendly to us or is going to do business with us on an increasing scale. Just now, for example, there is a school of ardent special pleaders who are very anxious that Spanish, with perhaps a sprinkling of Portuguese, should succeed to the position lately occupied by German. So they expatiate in the public prints on the beauties of Spanish literature, on the large rôle once played by Spain in the world's history, and on the wonderful possibilities of commerce with South America. At the same time they vigorously damn the Germans—insisting that the German language is uncouth and ugly (this always comes from persons who do not know anything about it), that at best the Germans have never done anything of importance for civilization, and that their literature is worthless. Sometimes they are willing to except two or three writers of the 18th century, but this is only a half-hearted concession, for they seldom know anything about Goethe, Schiller and Lessing either.

Now it is not my purpose, just at present, to argue the case for the study of German. I have been doing that, off and on, for forty years, and any further activity in that line can wait, so far as I am concerned, till we get peace and the world returns, if it ever does return, to normal and sober ways of thinking. I do wish to raise my voice, however, on behalf of the schoolchildren themselves. It is they whom we should consider. We should think of what is good for *them*; of their needs, aptitudes, station in life, future prospects; of the way things are likely to turn out for *them*. And how wrong it is to try to poison *their* young minds

with the bitter virus of the great war; to teach them to hate and despise Germans and to believe silly falsehoods with regard to them. It is the blessed prerogative of each new generation, as it comes along, to face life with a light heart and an open mind, as if the Great Adventure were a new thing. We ought not to weigh them down for their journey with a burden of hatred and prejudice growing out of a past of which they knew nothing. We do not want any hatreds whatever to become encysted in the national mind. We wish to be friendly toward all nations—even Mexico, if we can. Hate, except in the form of righteous indignation at wrong-doing, is a passion that harms and degrades the hater. Let us think steadily of the children and of what is going to be good for *them*—and not very much of propagandists who wish to magnify their specialty or to exploit their political and literary prejudices.

Suppose that a schoolboy takes up the study of Spanish merely because it has suddenly become the fashion, because some people are urging him to do so. He follows the current, having a vague idea that Spanish may somehow “come in handy,” and may even help him to get a living. He puts in several years on Spanish and then finds, in due course of time that his school smattering is of no use to him—will it not then be very cold comfort to him to know that our merchants and manufacturers are doing an extensive business with South America? *His* comfort will be of the same sort as that which the man out of a job gets from walking down Broadway. If, on the basis of his school Spanish, he tries to get a position he will find that nobody wants him. If he can sell goods he will quickly secure a good job and perhaps be sent to South America; and in that event a foundation in Spanish will be deemed a useful addition to his outfit. But if he tries to start on his school Spanish alone, without the salesmanship, he will find that there is nothing doing. This is what awaits nine-tenths of the boys and girls who are now rushing thoughtlessly into the study of Spanish, and someone should tell them so.

Let it be clearly understood that I am not attacking the study of Spanish, or of any other language, *for those who can look forward to using it*. I am concerned solely with the evil of driving, or coaxing or herding boys and girls into the study of *any language* that they will very certainly have no use for after they leave

school. I am concerned to prevent their setting out under an illusion; to forestall waste of time, disappointment and misapplication of energy.

The fact that our merchants and manufacturers are going to do an extensive business with any people is not at all a reason for teaching the language of that people in our schools of general education. It is an argument for instituting trade schools where the language in question shall be thoroly taught, by endless practise, to those who are going to need it—those for whom the job is waiting. If we are going to teach languages in our schools of general education merely because we are going to do business with the people who speak those languages we shall certainly have our hands full. We should have at once to put in Japanese and Chinese, also Russian, Polish, all of the Scandinavian languages, Dutch, German and Italian. And surely we could not dispense with Arabic. We shall probably have an expanded commerce all over the world.

Again, how absurd it is to push boys and girls, whose future is as yet quite indeterminate, into the study of any particular language on the general ground that its literature is worth knowing about. That is true of *all* literatures, ancient and modern. Icelandic, for example has a unique medieval literature of great distinction: is that a reason for setting our boys and girls generally at the study of Icelandic? There are a score or more of literatures all highly interesting, and each of them rich enough to furnish the specialty of a lifetime. The attempt to grade them with respect to their relative value is simply an expression of personal prejudice and personal limitations. One usually has a poor opinion of a literature that he does not know anything about. If I were to grade them I should probably put Greek at the top in a class by itself, then English: for third place I should hesitate between German and French. And so on. It is not necessary to pursue the gradation further. I merely remark that, as the matter strikes me, if literary value, distinction and importance is to be our criterion, we should teach in our schools neither French nor German nor Spanish, but dose our youth on English literature first of all, and then on Greek. Those two would suffice.

But I have taken time enough and must close. As a means of dealing practically with the ideas above set forth, supposing them

to have some solid merit, I suggest that a memorandum, or statement, on the study of forin languages in school should be prepared by the Regents and published under State auspices. It should be very carefully prepared by genuine experts having an eye single to the welfare of the young. It should be composed in plain, straightforward language, with the sole object of giving good advice and wise guidance. It should tell what this, that, and the other language is potentially good for, and how long it will have to be studied in order that its potential value may be realized. It should discreetly warn against the mendacious advertising fakir, who is out for the shekels, and against the special pleaders who promise more than can be performed, and urge specious and illusory reasons for studying the particular language they are interested in.

If such a statement, neither too long nor too short, could be prepared in the right spirit and made available for study and discussion by schoolchildren, parents and teachers, methinks it would do much good in the way of helping to wise decisions and preventing waste of time.

Columbia University

OUR THREEFOLD NEEDS

By E. C. HILLS

IN THE MODERN LANGUAGE JOURNAL of October, 1919, there was an article entitled "Has the War Proved that Our Methods of Teaching Modern Languages in the Colleges Are Wrong?—A Symposium." This article has caused considerable discussion, and as one result several distinguished Romance scholars were asked to add their views to those already given. The statements that have been received are given below:

"Modern language teaching in this country is in need of reform because the results obtained at present do not justify the effort expended or correspond to the importance of the subject. It seems to me that changes should be made along the following lines:

"(1) Teachers should have a better oral command of the language and at least a practical knowledge of phonetics.

"(2) Elementary classes should meet at least five times a week and the number of students should be limited to twenty.

"(3) At the end of each year (or of each semester where practicable) the best students should be placed in special sections where rapid progress would be made.

"(4) By insisting upon a speaking command of the foreign language on the part of graduate students, universities should call attention to its importance for the appreciation of literature and for the study of linguistics.

"What we need most of all, however, is a change in the attitude of faculties and students towards the study of modern languages which should bring about full recognition of its dignity and value, and of the great rôle it is destined to play in the curricula of the future."

PROFESSOR EARLE B. BABCOCK,
New York University

"What we need in modern language instruction is to get back to a solid foundation of systematic study, and away from 'reforms' and 'isms.' My talks with ex-service men have convinced me that what they needed most was drill in verbs, pronouns, and again *verbs*: tenses, moods, and verbal idioms. As one boy put it: 'I could look up nouns in my little dictionary, and the *War French* books gave lots of useful expressions, but to use verbs you've got

to know 'em.' A paragraph from my recent article on Spanish teaching in the *Journal of Education* expresses my attitude:

"Something has been said about various means of making the study of Spanish attractive to students, creating a Spanish atmosphere, utilizing games, plays, songs, appealing to the competitive sense, etc. It must be borne in mind, however, that such activity, no matter how ingeniously conceived, is never a substitute for good, hard work in learning the language. The sugar-coating makes the pill palatable, but it is the drug within that effects the cure, and if time presses we must needs take the medicine without the coating. No matter what 'perfectly lovely' times the teacher gives the class, if he does not make them *learn*, he is a failure as a teacher.'"

PROFESSOR HENRY GRATTAN DOYLE,
George Washington University

"Educational work is too poorly paid. The best minds do not always enter the field. Unless an ordinary instructor in our colleges can be paid about \$2500 to start we shall continue to have our college classes in the freshman and sophomore years taught by so-called graduate students. . . . In Spanish, another reform that is very imperative is the establishment of separate Spanish Departments with Spanish teachers as heads. As long as Spanish is an adjunct to French or German it will be poorly taught. . . . In most of our colleges and universities Romance departments are French departments. A glance at the Catalogue shows that Spanish and Italian receive little attention. A Spanish scholar and teacher should not have charge of a French department, and a French scholar and teacher should not have charge of a Spanish department.

"As for French and Spanish I believe they should be taught as living languages. For the first and second year classes native instructors should be obtained or American teachers who have a perfect command of the spoken language. The statement so frequently made that those who have a perfect command of French and Spanish, being as a rule, Frenchmen or Spaniards, cannot teach is the height of absurdity. Such statements are a confession of incapacity. The modern language teacher who merely translates into English because he cannot himself speak the foreign tongue is the one who spreads the legend that those who do speak the foreign tongue cannot teach."

PROFESSOR AURELIO M. ESPINOSA,
Leland Stanford Junior University

"As a rule nearly all who take up a foreign language desire to learn to speak it at short notice. . . . Those who are very familiar with foreign languages are well aware that these are not *learned*, they are *lived*—and one must be a long time living with them.

"Granted, for the moment, that the feat of learning to speak a foreign language in our classes in three or four years were possible, what then? From that very moment of perfect attainment, unless the student had the most unusual facilities for keeping up the language, he would immediately proceed to forget it. . . . As most of our University Extension classes here in Boston desire to hear the language spoken and strive themselves to attain some facility along those lines, naturally on my side, I strive to give them what they want. I use quite a number of Direct Method textbooks.

"The publishers are calling for these texts with which to teach *the spoken languages*, and today the teacher who can use these texts effectively is likely to meet with a cordial response from the many who desire to learn to speak 'at short notice,' and who are never likely to realize that such a result, in the nature of the case, is an impossibility."

PROFESSOR JAMES GEDDES, JR.,
Boston University

"The war has revealed to several millions of our young people (who have carried the news far and wide) that there are actually men and women living on the other side of the Atlantic; that the French, for instance, are an extant race, with speech, habits, and ideas strangely like and strangely unlike our own.

"It is for us to utilize the interest born of this new sense of reality, to keep vivid the image of the people behind the language and the literature, to develop the idea of human kinship and human differences."

PROFESSOR C. H. GRANDGENT,
Harvard University

"If the war has taught us any lesson with regard to the teaching of modern languages it is the futility of attempting to teach our students to speak a foreign language in two or three years of work in secondary school or in college.

"It is constantly being remarked that the European schoolboy learns to speak his foreign languages. But it must not be overlooked that the two chief factors in this achievement are: the European boy begins the study of foreign languages when he is eleven or twelve years old, when lingual training is easy; and he continues that study for six or eight years. If through the agency of the junior high school we can provide those two factors in our American schools, we may hope to attain results comparable with those of other countries.

"In the meantime, we must honestly accept the truth and admit that we cannot hope to teach students to speak another language in the few hundred hours of a school course.

"There still remain, however, certain things which we can hope to teach in our limited course. These are: the principles of grammar, translation, composition, pronunciation, and finally the ability to understand the spoken language.

"I cannot agree with Professor Ford in his statement that 'no small proportion of our students are linguistic morons,' unless he is willing to go with me a step farther and say that 'no small proportion of all our college students are mental morons.' . . . My experience has been that the students who fail in modern language courses are the students who fail in other courses; they are not 'linguistically' unfit, they are 'mentally' unfit.

"At Cornell we require three years of elementary work before a student is admitted to a course in conversation or a course in literature.

"I only hope that we shall not be lured into undertaking the impossible by the ill-advised and ill-founded pronouncements of theorists."

PROFESSOR HAYWARD KENISTON,
Cornell University

"We learned from the war little that was new in regard to language teaching. The defects in our methods and results are due chiefly to unfavorable conditions, such as lack of sufficient time, size of classes, inadequate training of teachers, and total lack of language-sense on the part of many pupils.

"Reform should consist in improving such conditions. The present clamor for conversational fluency should not blind us to the necessity of mastering the grammar and learning to appreciate the literature. We should insist on the importance to the nation as well as to the individual of having foreign languages thoroughly taught in secondary schools, and of having sufficient time assigned for the purpose."

PROFESSOR KENNETH MCKENZIE,
University of Illinois

X "I believe that better results in language instruction are not to be gained by any radical change in aim and method but by the gradual removal of the handicaps of excessively large classes and insufficient time, by the more general adoption of the sabbatical leave (a mythical institution for most of us), and by holding in check the radical reformers.

"In the first year of language work our aim should be to help the student lay a solid foundation of grammatical knowledge and arouse in him, through the use of material that will give him some acquaintance with the racial character of the people whose language he is studying, the permanent interest that will impel him to

build upon this foundation according to his individual needs or desires.

"In the reaction that has taken place from the antiquated 'grammar-translation' method, the fanatical application of the so-called 'direct method' would be just as harmful to the real purpose of language instruction in colleges and universities.

"There can be little differentiation in the instruction given students during the first year in college and the first two years in high school. After the fundamentals of grammar and a basic vocabulary have been acquired through careful grammar study, much oral practice, reading, and even some translation into English, the student should then have the opportunity to specialize according to his needs or wishes."

PROFESSOR G. W. UMPHREY,
University of Washington

✕ These statements and those that appeared in the *Symposium* make clear that the basic needs of successful modern language teaching are threefold: (1) competent and enthusiastic teachers, (2) small classes, (3) sufficient time. With these three, all things are possible.

But competent and enthusiastic teachers, as a rule, can be had only by clothing their profession with dignity and by granting them adequate salaries. Small classes and sufficient time are strictly financial problems. In other words, good modern language instruction can be had if the public is willing to pay for it, and not otherwise. It is one of our tasks, therefore, to convince the public that the study of foreign languages is important.

There was a time, and not so long ago, when American imports and exports were bought and sold by foreign agents in our very harbors and shipped to and fro in foreign bottoms. The time has now come when the United States, as an industrial nation, must go out after the markets of the world. To do so we must have American agents who know the languages and customs of other peoples. This is an utilitarian argument, but it has great force.

Once we led a quiet and isolated life and were not especially interested in the great world movements that went on about us; but the war plunged us irrevocably into the midst of things and there we shall stay. To hold our own we must know our neighbors. The youthful period of blissful ignorance has gone forever, and the great mass of our people do not know it yet. We must teach them.

We are passing through troublous times. A thousand and one problems confront us and we do not know which way to turn. But other nations have been in troubled waters. Some passed through successfully and some were wrecked. Our people, for the most part, are serenely unaware of these facts, and we must do all that lies in our power to show them the moral and spiritual experiences of other nations.

In these ways and in a score of others we can be of real service to our country. When the great public comes to realize what we can do and are seeking to do, then and then only shall we have a sufficient number of competent teachers, small classes, and all the time we need to do our work well.

Indiana University

ON THE TEACHING OF GERMAN¹

By ROBERT H. FIFE, JR.

THE teacher of German who reviews the situation at the present time may well take as his subject the title of Burke's famous essay, "Thoughts on the Causes of the Present Discontent." He is called upon for the same qualities which John Adams in 1776 demanded of him who would manage the United Colonies: "The meekness of Moses, the patience of Job, the wisdom of Solomon, added to the valor of David." As a result of the drive against the study of the German language in the past two years, the whole field of German instruction is like a country swept by a hurricane. Here and there in some protected spot a farm or grove has been spared, but in the main the work of destruction is complete. Trees are uprooted, houses unroofed, fences laid flat, and blooming crops swept to ruin. In our high school German departments the devastation has been no less complete. To a great extent these departments have been badly crippled or utterly destroyed, the teachers have been driven into other work, for which they are only insufficiently prepared, and in some sections the teaching of the language has been made illegal. The hysteria of war-time psychology, aided by the efforts of time-serving politicians, could not well go further than it has in many sections of the country. The preparatory schools, it is true, as well as the endowed colleges and the technical schools, sheltered behind their conservative walls from the waves of popular excitement, are in somewhat better case; but the higher institutions have their own problem, for here the elementary and intermediate classes are crowded, while the number of young men and women entering college with two or three years of German preparation is approaching the vanishing point. The prospects are that soon practically all the high school graduates who take German in college will find themselves in the elementary courses, while in the

¹ A paper read before the Eleventh Annual Session of the New York State Modern Language Association, Albany, November 25, 1919.

Freshman and Sophomore years the advanced courses will be reserved for the graduates of private preparatory schools.

It is manifest that the effect on secondary education of this sweeping from the program of a well-developed subject has been little short of disastrous. Two years ago, when the war-wave swept over us, German was among the best-taught subjects in our high schools, and teachers of German were well on the way to develop a methodology that should set a fast pace for other language teachers. The results of the drive against German have shown themselves in the overcrowding of French and Spanish classes and in a reduction of personal efficiency on the part of the teachers of these subjects, many of whom have been forced to take them without adequate preparation. The net result of it all is the keen disappointment of students and parents with the results and a growing disregard by school administrators of proper methods and purposes of language instruction.

It is now our duty to face the situation as it is, our duty no less as patriots than as pedagogues. Never was the uselessness of crying over spilt milk more apparent than in this crisis. The drive against German was a perfectly natural and perfectly logical effect of war-time psychology, and the teacher of German, in the main, as innocent a victim of war as any ever dragged to the altar of Mars. We have made our sacrifice to patriotism and are entitled to all the precious benefits of adversity. "To endure trampling upon with patience and self-control," said Mr. Gladstone to John Morley during the bitter fight over Home Rule in 1893, "is no bad element in the preparation of a man for walking firmly and successfully in the path of great public duty. Be sure that discipline is full of blessings."² During the war our patriotic duty demanded that we keep silence in the face of misunderstanding and vituperation: now no less a patriotic duty demands that we adjust ourselves to the new situation and reconstruct that which has been destroyed in order to defend America's position in the world. We must do this even at the cost of personal sacrifice, that our boys and girls may go forth to the peaceful international competition equipped with just as good weapons as the boys and girls of Europe. It cannot be denied that the knowledge

² John Morley, *Recollections* I. 365.

of German, one of the few major languages of civilization, is one of these weapons.

In this connection, permit me to quote a passage from the Report of the British Commission, appointed by Mr. Asquith in 1916, whose findings, after the examination of 137 witnesses from many walks of professional and scholastic life, must be known to you all:

"Before the war German was perhaps the first language from the points of view of information. . . . In philosophy and in those sciences and quasi-sciences in which new knowledge is constantly acquired and general conceptions undergo frequent modifications, no student who wished to keep abreast of the times could afford to ignore German publications. This position was strengthened by the industry and competence of German translators. Important works of learning and literature, produced in languages not generally known, such as Dutch and Russian, were often accessible only in German translations. . . . If Germany after the war is still enterprising, formidable no less in trade than in arms, we cannot afford to ignore her for a moment. Knowledge of Germany by specialists will not suffice: it must be wide-spread throughout the people. A democracy cannot afford to be ignorant."³

It is apparent that these words apply with double force to America at the present time. It is trite to say that our relation to Europe since 1917 has radically changed. Despite ourselves and as the result of forces whose unhalting trend no group or generation of men can alter, we have become an immediate neighbor of all the European peoples; and however much we may wish to isolate ourselves from their influence, it is but a counsel of ignorance when we are told that we must shut ourselves up again in our tower of ivory. Only one item need be mentioned here: we have loaned more than ten billion dollars to the nations of Europe, and they are so far from being able to discharge this obligation that even the interest is to be funded. Bankers and business men tell us that this is only a beginning. In the new Europe we find a Germany which is assuredly still "enterprising, highly organized, and industrious."

Moreover we find that in a new and important sense Germany has become an intermediate language for the countries east of the

³ *Modern Studies, being a Report of the Committee on the Position of Modern Languages in the Educational System of Great Britain*, H.M.S. Office 1918, pp. 59-60.

Vistula, the March, and the Leitha. Ten, perhaps more, new nations have risen on the ruins of what was once Russia and Austria-Hungary. A long line of ancient peoples, shot through with new national ambitions and with a new world of culture in their loins, lies between the Baltic and the Adriatic, each intent on pushing forward its civilization and of course its language as the chief representative of that civilization. America has stood sponsor for these nations, and America cannot close her eyes to them, nor to the Russia that lies to the east of them, as fields for trade and foci of civilization. We cannot learn their languages, and fortunately it is not necessary to do that in order to communicate with them. Business men, professional men and scholars of standing among them are all bi-lingual. We must perforce use German, which has been the *lingua franca* of these peoples for many generations. Without German we cannot successfully compete for their trade. Without German we cannot share their discoveries or inventions, follow the experiments of their scientists, nor enter into their philosophy, history, and literature. Unless we are to see them only through the eyes of Germans and know and trade with them only through the intermediation of Germans, we must ourselves know German. Now, more than ever, it is clear that the American boy or girl who aspires to do more than tickle the surface of culture must know two European languages—French, the language of Western Europe, and German, no less the language of all of Europe lying east of the Rhine. Says the British Commission:

"No country can afford to rely upon its domestic stores of knowledge. The whole civilized world is a co-operative manufactory of knowledge. In science, technical and pure, in history, antiquities, law, politics, economics, philosophy, new researches are constantly leading to new discoveries, new and fruitful ideas are giving new pointers to thought, new applications of old principles are being made, old stores are being re-arranged, classified and made available for new purposes. In this work all the civilized countries of the world collaborate, and in no branch of knowledge, abstract or concrete, disinterested or applied to the uses of man, can the specialist neglect the work of foreign students."⁴

If America is to keep pace with the other foremost nations, it must know what the other branches of the knowledge factory are

⁴ Ibid., pp. 30, 31.

producing. It cannot know this without German, and this applies not only to the twenty-one universities and eight technical universities of Germany and the German universities in Austria and Bohemia, but also to the universities at Agram, Budapest, Lemberg, Cracow, Warsaw and Riga, not to mention those in Russia and Sweden, Norway and Denmark. It would certainly suit us better if these centers of thought communicated with the outside world in English: in view of the history of the emancipation of the Eastern nationalities, it would be politically more natural if most of them did so in French. But the presence between them and Western Europe of seventy millions of German-speaking people and the speech-habits of a thousand years bring it about that Baltic and Slavic and Magyar philosopher and historian and economist, chemist and physicist and mineralogist can communicate with America only through German.⁵

It has often been objected that these higher aims are only for the colleges and technical schools and universities, not for the American high school, a large majority of whose students seek no further education. It is quite true that the colleges and their feeding preparatory schools—whose patrons insist on having the best—retained and in many cases emphasized the study of German even through the war years. But is not equality of educational opportunity for all the greatest hope of democracy? While England at the present time, under the leadership of Mr. H. A. L. Fisher, is doing everything to bring its secondary education and higher education into closer alliance, America's duty is to develop still further the system which gives to every boy and girl the opportunity to prepare for leadership, for in America every boy and girl is potentially a leader. Those of us who have been for years on the firing line of modern language teaching know well enough the necessity for beginning the study of a foreign modern language in the high school years. Unless it is begun in those years, the chances for its really useful acquisition are very small.

⁵ Cf. the report of a recent traveler in Jugo-Slavia, Major Sherman M. Craiger: "There was no propaganda against the use of the German language, as most Slavs are as familiar with that tongue as with their own. The business men of Jugo-Slavia find it advantageous to employ German for commercial purposes, and it is the only practical vehicle of communication between the Slavs and the western world. Americans who expect to do business in middle Europe should take this to heart." *N. Y. Sunday Times*. Jan. 11, 1920 (IV, 4).

But admitting that all of this is so—and schoolmen are pretty well agreed on this subject—what are we going to do about it? Prejudice against the study of German, like other expressions of war-time psychology, is a result of our national concentration on a great task, and like the sugar shortage, labor unrest, and high prices, one of the results of the conflict that promises to remain long after the conflict is over. Here once more it is our patriotic duty to face the situation with courage and hope. Abnormal mental states are more difficult to cure than most bodily ills, nevertheless in the healthy individual they gradually yield to treatment; and American public opinion is a healthy organism, where the most obstinate fixed ideas finally give way. Experts tell us that when convalescence from a mental crisis begins, the patient's recovery may be hastened by an appeal to sound argument. Public opinion in this country is ardent and mercurial on the surface, but beneath thoroughly sound; and in the end always responds to appeals to a sound and healthy patriotism.

In facing the situation, we must do so with the consciousness that the world has changed in many ways during the war and that especially the teacher of German has to make many readjustments. Through its planetary nature the struggle has given to the study of all modern languages a new significance. The danger of ignorance is especially emphasized in the British Report:

"The war has made this people conscious of its ignorance of foreign countries and their peoples. A democratic government requires an instructed people; and for the first time this people is desirous of instruction. . . . It cannot be said that before the war knowledge of foreign countries and their peoples was sufficient in ministers, politicians, journalists, civil servants, university professors, schoolmasters, men of business, or in any class of those whose function it was to instruct and guide the public. . . . Thus the classes and masses were ignorant alike to the point of public danger."⁶

How true that is of America at the present day! It behooves us to go at the matter of enlightenment without delay, for every true patriot must be appalled at the danger which threatens our country through the ignorance of foreign languages and conditions on the part of leaders of public opinion. Thus it is well that both the National Federation of Modern Language Teachers and the

⁶ Pp. 31, 32.

American Modern Language Association have appointed committees to make at least a preliminary survey of the situation in America. A proper survey, however, must not be confined to schoolmen, but must embrace men of other professions, and men of affairs whose interest lies in the enlightenment of public opinion.

That there must be a readjustment both in the subject-matter of instruction and its method must be plain to every teacher of German. Many things have been swept away which the German instructor often in his ignorance dwelt upon too earnestly, not to say too affectionately. Gone are the trappings of feudalism and materialism, the favorite and as the results showed, the by no means harmless hobby of certain instructors. Gone are the picturesque machinery of autocracy and the theories of "dualistic" government. Gone are the rigid social classifications, gone the chapters on the military and trading fleets, gone above all the caste-hardened military system. Even words have taken on a different meaning, such as *Reich* and *Landtag*, which have quite changed their connotation since November 9, 1918. *Verwaltung*, *Behörde*, *Magistrat* (the fountain of all the dread "*Verbotens*") are symbols of something quite new. All the chapters on politics and administration (think of that on taxation!) will have to be re-written for the new handbook on Germany, which must also revise its ethnographical and linguistic material. Alsace, West Prussia, Posen, Schleswig, Danzig are topics that suggest radical alterations. On the other hand, new material must be added. Austria must now be treated adequately in every discussion of the political and social background of the German-speaking peoples. The culture of Vienna is henceforth as important for us as that of Berlin; Linz and Graz are for the student of German cities as essential subjects as Stuttgart and Augsburg; the folklore of Styria and the Tyrol as noteworthy expressions of the German soul as that of the Schwarzwald and Thüringen. Indeed, the whole basis for the study of the social and economic organization of German lands must be surveyed anew and new points of view formulated.

But how much remains for him who conceives of the study of a modern language as the beginning of the pursuit of a great ideal,

the so-called "cultural aim." In this connection, the Report from which I have quoted so freely says:

"The practical aim of education is to enable men to live as individuals and citizens. The idealistic aim of education is to enable men to live better. . . . Early we should also aspire to make some of our boys and girls understand that foreign languages are not learned as an end in themselves, but as a means to the comprehension of foreign peoples, whose history is full of fascinating adventure, who have said and felt and seen and made things worthy of our comprehension, who are now alive and engaged in like travail with ourselves and therefore can the better help us to understand what is the whole truth."⁷

In this readjustment to the new relations of German-speaking lands within and without, it is refreshing to remember that the basic character of the German people and the popular expression of national culture have not changed and cannot change. War alters exteriors only. German folkpoetry survived the Thirty Years War and bloomed forth again after a century and a half in Goethe and Bürger. The popular drama passed undestroyed through the dissolution and resolution of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to reappear in Lessing. It may indeed be that the results of the Great War and the social revolution will stimulate again philosophy and literature and music, as did the results of the French Revolution, and that a romantic age will follow on Germany's humiliation and re-birth after the fall of the Guglielmian state like that which followed the fall of the Frederician. The really great names in German literature and culture remain as aloof as ever from political contamination. Goethe and Schiller, Grillparzer and Hebbel and Keller mean as much to the world as they did in the microscopic days before the birth of Pan-Germanism. The great lyricists from Eichendorff to Liliencron are aseptic of politics. Where does one find in the novel from *Wilhelm Meister* to *Jörn Uhl* aught save the truest human appeal!

This is also manifestly true of philosophy and the natural sciences. The award of three Nobel prizes in physics and chemistry to German university teachers in the very year of the Peace Treaty testifies that Germany is still an important part of the "co-operative manufactory of knowledge" and demonstrates how

⁷ Ibid., pp. 46, 48.

little Americans can afford to neglect the productions of German scientists. As teachers of German we must think of our subject less in terms of politics and more in terms of the widest culture. Here we still have at hand for our students the great storehouses of science, poetry and art. Here we shall find that the Great War, like other wars, has failed to touch the real substantive material, whose value made for the study of German the position which it occupied in America before 1914.

On the other hand, the intense national competition begotten by the war teaches us the necessity for making what we teach immediately usable. We in this country have too often looked upon the study of modern languages as contributing in some undefined way to the student's uplift and development, with an aim as indefinite as the prayers of Chateaubriand, which he claimed to have directed out into the great dark Unknown. The much-criticised Students' Army Training Corps taught this one thing—that to be worthy of the student's time, that which he learns must be *immediately* usable. For this purpose emphasis must be placed directly on the student's special need, whether for business, for professional preparation or for one of the many branches of technical work. Oral and aural work assume through the war a new and vital importance. Thoroughness of method and a constant revision and re-orientation of aim and purpose must replace the old mental attitude that if the boy or girl successfully passed the examination, some way, somehow, love's labor would not be lost. Above all, our attention should constantly be focused on one great aim, to fill the need of our country for men and women trained in the knowledge of foreign peoples. For that purpose, books on German popular culture and on the present and prospective position of the German-speaking lands among the nations ought to form an important part of the subject-matter of instruction for all pupils from the elementary year.

In spite of the deplorable situation which has come as a by-product of the war for the freeing of Europe, and of Germany herself, there is much at the present moment to encourage the teacher of German. The war has brought it about that men of affairs take a far deeper interest in the study of modern languages than ever before. This, with our small classes, offers an extraordinarily favorable moment to the teacher of German for fruitful

experiment. When times are dull and a factory is half idle, the management takes stock and plans and experiments and trains the staff for the days when profitable business shall again arise. The teacher of German is for the moment in the same position. He has also a tremendous encouragement in the spirit of his students to-day. Free from prejudice and unfettered by the traditions of past hatred, Young America looks forward with ardent eyes to a future in which his country is to play a new rôle among the nations. Deeply patriotic, he asks but the means of making himself useful to America and mankind. In furnishing him with a knowledge of German as a part of his essential equipment for leadership and usefulness, we are performing a truly patriotic duty.

Columbia University

L'EVOLUTION RÉCENTE DES UNIVERSITÉS FRANÇAISES

By FRANCK L. SCHOELL, *Agrégé des Lettres*

L'UNIVERSITÉ DE FRANCE, on le sait, est, comme tant d'autres institutions françaises, une création de Napoléon 1^{er}. C'est lui qui l'a conçue à la manière d'un régiment dont les quinze compagnies (ou académies) seraient en tout point identiques et dont le colonel (dénommé Grand Maître) serait installé à Paris pour y être bien dans la main du véritable Maître.

Dans le beau discours que M. Raymond Poincaré, alors Président de la République Française, prononçait lors de l'inauguration solennelle de l'Université de Strasbourg, le 22 novembre 1919, il rappelait cette conception qui présida à cette refonte de nos Universités:

"Seul chargé désormais de l'enseignement supérieur, l'Etat ne tolère plus auprès de lui qu'un grand corps universitaire qu'il entend bien tenir sous son autorité et à la tête duquel il délègue un grand maître.

"Plus d'Universités régionales; rien que des circonscriptions administratives qui s'appellent des Académies. Les Facultés resteront partout isolées les unes des autres, et, à Strasbourg comme ailleurs, le droit, les lettres, les sciences et la médecine resteront confinés dans autant de compartiments distincts, comme s'ils représentaient des puissances rivales, incapables de vivre en bonne harmonie."

Cette tendance à la centralisation, à l'unité—pour ne pas dire à l'uniformité—subsiste encore après un siècle, on ne saurait trop le répéter, et c'est peut-être elle qui distingue encore le mieux nos Universités des Universités américaines: ces dernières nous apparaissent d'une diversité étonnante: l'une compte plus de deux siècles d'existence, l'autre, qui ne cède en rien à la première pour l'importance ni pour la richesse, n'a pas trente ans d'âge; l'une est ouverte aux étudiants des deux sexes, l'autre uniquement à ceux du sexe masculin, la troisième exclusivement aux étudiantes; l'une est une fondation privée, dont les étudiants paient des

droits d'études, à moins qu'ils n'aient obtenu une bourse, l'autre est une Université d'Etat dont l'enseignement est gratuit aux étudiants de l'Etat.

En France, rien de pareil. Les Universités privées—Universités catholiques—dont nous comptons quelques-unes, sont presque négligeables dans la vie universitaire de la nation. C'est l'Etat, représenté par le Ministre de l'Instruction publique, qui nomme les professeurs, c'est lui qui fixe partout les droits d'études, c'est lui qui détermine la date des examens, lui seul qui octroie les grades universitaires.

Au demeurant, il faut convenir que cette uniformité nous rend souvent de grands services. Elle a d'abord pour effet de donner à tous nos examens et diplômes rigoureusement la même valeur. En France, on est Bachelier ès lettres tout court, Licencié en droit tout court, et non pas Bachelier ès lettres de l'Université de Poitiers ou Licencié en droit de celle de Toulouse. Les programmes d'examens sont partout les mêmes, l'application de ces programmes est partout la même, car les maîtres qui les appliquent s'inspirent en somme du même esprit et ont été en leur temps soumis aux mêmes disciplines intellectuelles.

On ne saurait assez répéter cette vérité en Amérique, où un trop grand nombre peut-être ont une tendance à croire qu'un diplôme portant la mention prestigieuse "Université de Paris" vaut davantage qu'un diplôme octroyé par l'Université de Rennes, par exemple. Nous connaissons une jeune Française à qui une directrice d'école américaine demandait sur les bancs de quelle Université elle avait étudié, et, lorsqu'elle répondit qu'elle avait fréquenté l'Université de Caen—et non celle de Paris—un je ne sais quoi lui fit comprendre qu'elle avait légèrement baissé dans l'estime de son interlocutrice.

Il est exact qu'il fut un temps où le doctorat de l'Université de Paris était notoirement plus recherché que celui de toute autre université française. Mais cette partialité injustifiée ne subsiste plus guère aujourd'hui, car quelques-unes de nos meilleures thèses sont depuis quelque temps soutenues dans nos universités de province, et notamment à celle de Strasbourg.

Par conséquent, pour résumer cette partie de notre exposé, disons qu'il y a en Amérique M. A. et M. A. (de très bons M. A., comme celui de Johns Hopkins, et de moins bons), mais qu'en

France, il n'y a qu'un baccalauréat, qu'une licence, qu'un diplôme d'Etudes de Civilisation française.

Un grand avantage dérive de cette uniformité de valeur qui est la marque de nos examens: il est en effet des plus faciles de négocier avec nous des équivalences d'examens et diplômes, puisque chacun de ces examens et diplômes suppose de la part de l'étudiant la même somme de connaissances, la même maturité d'esprit, la même aptitude aux études supérieures.

Tout récemment, un comité, composé mi-partie de Français, mi-partie d'Américains, était constitué à New York dans le but de déterminer enfin une équivalence pratique des grades universitaires français et américains. Si le travail fut relativement si simple, et des décisions satisfaisantes si rapidement atteintes, la raison en est pour une bonne part que l'uniformité des grades français facilitait grandement leur tâche aux membres du comité.

Aussi bien, cette centralisation universitaire que nous constatons dans notre pays n'empêche point que l'Université de France ne soit un corps vivant soumis à des courbes d'évolution rapides et parfaitement capable de se réadapter continuellement aux nécessités de la vie, au fur et à mesure que ces dernières se manifestent ou s'accusent. Nous n'en voulons pour preuve que les trois transformations récentes qui marquent la vie universitaire en France depuis la guerre: le relèvement des traitements des professeurs, l'avènement de plus en plus irrésistible du régionalisme universitaire, et la conscience sans cesse plus nette que prennent nos Universités de leurs devoirs vis-à-vis du nombre croissant de leurs étudiants étrangers.

Le relèvement des traitements universitaires s'imposait depuis quelques années déjà. La guerre tout court, puis surtout la guerre sous-marine, avaient fait monter le prix de la vie dans des proportions telles qu'il devenait manifestement impossible de nourrir une famille et de vivre dignement avec les maigres ressources allouées par l'Etat appauvri. Un professeur d'université devait déjà mener une vie étriquée, à moins qu'il n'eût de la fortune—cas rare. Mais que dire alors de la vie du maître de conférences (instructor) qui recevait moitié moins? Or le titre de professeur et les émoluments afférents, sont beaucoup moins généreusement octroyés en France qu'en Amérique, et si l'Etat voulait continuer à s'assurer un personnel de choix, il fallait qu'il

y mit le prix, malgré la situation embarrassée de ses finances. Le danger était surtout grand pour le personnel de nos facultés des sciences, car, ne l'oublions pas, le corps enseignant de nos universités se recrute uniquement parmi nos professeurs de l'enseignement secondaire: or ces derniers désertaient en masse, car ils préféraient gagner leur vie dans l'industrie, moyennant plus de labeur peut-être, et la renonciation à de beaux loisirs, mais avec l'assurance, à tout le moins, de lendemains prospères. . . .

Dès après la victoire, conscient de sa responsabilité vis-à-vis de la nation et des jeunes générations, le parlement attaqua le problème en face. Il fallait d'ailleurs qu'il l'attaquât bien vite, car le mécontentement grondait parmi les professeurs, victimes d'une grande injustice, et des menaces, qu'il eût été peu sage de ne pas prendre au sérieux, commençaient à se faire entendre.

Les augmentations consenties par la loi de juillet 1919 sont des plus appréciables: elles atteignent, parfois même dépassent, les 75% des traitements d'avant-guerre, et surtout elles consacrent un principe très juste: à mérite et à rang égal, deux professeurs ne doivent pas nécessairement toucher le même traitement; le professeur marié et père de famille a droit à recevoir davantage. Autrement dit, l'Etat accorde une véritable prime à la naissance de chaque enfant.

Cette innovation était dictée au législateur par le souci de contribuer si possible au relèvement de la natalité française, si essentiel au relèvement de la France; mais elle était avant tout une mesure de justice sociale, une concession faite à la *famille*, que l'on substituait partiellement à l'*individu*, que l'on élevait en quelque sorte officiellement au-dessus de l'individu.

Nous ne serions pas surpris que ce principe, assez généralement adopté par l'Etat français, et dont l'application donne d'excellents résultats, soit très sérieusement médité hors de France et y trouve de prochaines applications.

Quelques années déjà avant la guerre, des velléités de décentralisation s'étaient par la force des choses insinuées dans notre organisme universitaire. Depuis 1893, par étapes successives, l'enseignement supérieur avait été en France l'objet de réformes profondes, et nos universités, telles qu'elles avaient été refondues en 1896, n'étaient plus de vaines abstractions: elles étaient dorénavant des corps vivants, ou susceptibles de le devenir; elles pouvaient

s'assouplir à des conditions d'existence fort différentes et se développer dans les directions les plus variées.

Douées de la personnalité légale, nos universités pouvaient dorénavant recevoir des dons particuliers qui ajoutaient à la richesse de leurs bibliothèques, à la diversité de leurs enseignements, voire même à la spaciosité de leurs locaux. C'est ainsi que, sous le rectorat de L.Liard, la Sorbonne reçut de très beaux dons de la marquise Arconato-Visconti et du prince de Monaco. Nombre de gouvernements étrangers—Portugal, Roumanie, etc.—fondèrent à la Sorbonne des chaires nouvelles et spéciales—langue et littérature portugaise, philologie roumaine, etc.

Certaines de nos métropoles universitaires se spécialisèrent selon les aptitudes propres que leur assuraient, soit leur position géographique, soit la nature même du sol sur lequel elles avaient grandi. L'Université de Lyon, voisine de l'Italie, s'orientait tout naturellement vers les études d'italien, d'art italien. L'Université d'Aix-Marseille, proche du continent africain, s'intéressait particulièrement aux sciences coloniales. Celles de Toulouse et de Bordeaux adoptaient entre autres spécialités celles des études hispaniques ou sud-américaines et prenaient sous leur patronage l'Institut Français de Madrid. Grenoble, celle de nos universités peut-être qui avait élu domicile dans le cadre de nature le plus pittoresque et le plus somptueux, au coeur même des Alpes françaises, attira à elle toute une clientèle étrangère d'étudiants allemands, scandinaves, russes, et leur offrit l'enseignement le plus recherché, sans doute, des étrangers: de bonnes leçons de phonétique française professées par un phonéticien éminent dans un laboratoire approprié.

Bref, dès avant la guerre, la spécialisation progressive de nos universités—j'allais dire la découverte par chacune de sa vocation propre—était en bonne voie. Mais il manquait une direction d'ensemble, il manquait surtout un exemple éclatant qui donnât toute sa valeur, toute sa portée à ce mouvement régionaliste.

Cet exemple éclatant, l'Université de Strasbourg est venue fort opportunément nous le fournir.

De l'Université française d'avant 1870, il subsistait le souvenir très vivant et très net—car une université où ont professé un Pasteur et un Fustel de Coulanges est assurée de ne jamais tomber dans l'oubli des hommes. Mais il n'en subsistait guère

que le souvenir. Nous nous trouvions, au lendemain de l'armistice, en présence d'une université allemande, voire même pangermaniste, car c'est à peine si les Prussiens avaient admis quelques rares Alsaciens à professer dans leur propre université. Presque tout le personnel enseignant venait en droite ligne des bords de la Sprée.

Allions-nous du jour au lendemain insuffler à ce grand corps, qui nous était légué par le vaincu, une âme uniquement, et abstraitement, et impersonnellement française? C'eût été une faute, et c'est ce que comprirent admirablement les organisateurs de la nouvelle université.

"Sans doute, dit M. R. Poincaré dans son discours du 22 novembre 1919, toute Université est une école nationale, en ce sens qu'elle travaille au bien du pays et qu'elle doit enseigner à la jeunesse les intérêts permanents de la patrie; sans doute aussi toute Université est une école universelle, en ce sens qu'elle est ouverte à toutes les sciences. . . ., mais toute Université est en même temps une école régionale qui doit tenir compte des aspirations particulières de la contrée où elle vit, des habitudes locales, du milieu économique, de tout ce qui donne à une vieille province française sa physionomie et son caractère. L'Université de Strasbourg sera donc une grande Université nationale, mais elle restera, pour l'honneur et pour la joie de la France, une Université nettement alsacienne."

Et en effet, l'Université de Strasbourg est bien une Université alsacienne. Un très grand nombre de ses maîtres les plus éminents sont des Alsaciens: l'historien Chr. Pfister, doyen de la Faculté des Lettres, le théologien Baldensperger, jadis professeur à l'Université de Giessen, le juriste Eccard, les médecins Pfersdorff et Schikele, pour ne citer que ceux-là. De multiples enseignements sont consacrés à la dialectologie alsacienne, à l'histoire des pays rhénans. Une société des amis de l'Université de Strasbourg vient de se fonder, qui se recrute principalement parmi les Alsaciens et se propose de resserrer encore, si possible, les liens entre l'Université et le milieu régional où elle vit et grandit.

Bref, alsacienne, l'Université de Strasbourg l'est, mais elle le deviendra de plus en plus.

Simultanément, ou presque, l'ouverture à Nancy et à Caen—cités du fer—de véritables instituts techniques destinés à vulgariser

les tout derniers progrès de la sidérurgie, la multiplication à Grenoble—cité de la "houille blanche," de l'électro-chimie et de l'électro-métallurgie—de centres électrotechniques appropriés aux besoins de la région en ingénieurs, en contremaîtres et en chimistes: toutes ces créations nouvelles et d'autres encore viennent confirmer, s'il en est besoin, la signification que nous attachons à la rentrée de l'Université de Strasbourg dans la communauté des Universités françaises: résolument, nos universités provinciales sont devenues des cellules actives de vie régionale intense. De plus en plus elles tendent à une autonomie morale, elles se *font* une personnalité, et nous croyons—avec les Compagnons de l'*Université Nouvelle*¹—que là est bien pour elles l'avenir et la véritable utilité.

Mais il se manifeste dans les Universités françaises une autre tendance, non moins symptomatique, une autre preuve de leur parfaite adaptabilité aux conditions nouvelles de la vie internationale.

Nos Universités s'appêtent à tout faire pour attirer, satisfaire et retenir les étudiants étrangers désireux de s'initier à nos méthodes d'enseignement supérieur et de se livrer chez nous aux recherches de la science désintéressée ou appliquée.

Or ce ne fut pas toujours le cas.

Sans doute les étudiants polonais, russes, voire même turcs, étaient fort nombreux, avant la guerre, à se faire immatriculer à nos universités et trouvaient le séjour à Paris ou à Nancy fort à leur goût. Mais les étudiants anglais ou américains ne connaissaient point le chemin de nos Universités. Nous en avions quelques centaines à peine, dont la plupart fréquentaient à Paris notre Ecole des Beaux-Arts ou nos ateliers de peinture, justement réputés. Au contraire, Ed. Gosse estime que 15,000 étudiants anglo-saxons au moins se dirigeaient chaque année vers Berlin, vers Heidelberg, vers Leipzig.

La France en effet orientait tout son effort vers l'enseignement réservé aux seuls Français. Stephen H. Bush, de l'Université d'Iowa, grand ami de la France, constate lui-même:²

"Before the war the French universities were rather inhospitable to Americans. Students found themselves in difficulties of red tape. It was hard to find and register for the work which they

¹ Paris, Fischbacher, 1918.

² *American Soldiers in French Universities*, Educational Review, Jan., 1920, p. 72.

wanted. The professors did not understand them or the system of which they were the product."

Or ces temps ont changé, M. Bush se hâte de le constater. Les indications de ce changement sont si nombreuses que nous ne saurions les enregistrer toutes ici.

Notons seulement que l'Office National des Universités françaises,³ que nous pourrions appeler "Bureau Parisien de liaison universitaire internationale," a maintenant des fenêtres largement ouvertes sur tous les continents, sur tous les pays, et a notamment fondé à New York un véritable bureau d'information⁴ qui fournit gratuitement aux Américains tous renseignements utiles pour un séjour d'études aux Universités françaises.

Constatons que le Bureau des Renseignements de la Sorbonne⁵ que l'auteur de ces lignes connut jadis revêche, inhospitalier, inaccessible tant au Français qu'à l'étranger, est à présent accueillant aux visiteurs, qu'il est outillé pour répondre aux questions qui lui sont posées, qu'une bonne partie de son personnel comprend, parle et écrit couramment l'anglais et les principales langues étrangères, que son directeur, M. Henri Goy, est admirablement informé sur toutes matières universitaires, que ses voyages l'ont initié aux goûts et aux desiderata des universités étrangères, et que de plus sa complaisance et sa courtoisie ne connaissent point de bornes.

Jadis, pour prendre d'autres exemples au hasard, il n'était pas donné à la Sorbonne un seul cours où il fût tenu compte de la présence, parmi les auditeurs, d'un grand nombre d'étrangers auxquels notre culture était chose nouvelle, déroutante. L'envahissement de la Sorbonne, en mars 1919, par des centaines d'étudiants du corps expéditionnaire américain obligea le conseil de l'Université à improviser en quelques semaines un enseignement adapté aux besoins de nos hôtes.

L'improvisation fut si brillante, si définitive, que ces cours de civilisation française, hâtivement organisés, se trouvèrent répondre à tous les besoins normaux du temps de paix, et qu'ils continuent à se donner avec un égal succès semestre après semestre.⁶

³ 96 Boulevard Raspail, Paris. Le directeur en est M. C. Petit-Dutaillis.

⁴ 411 W. 117th Street, New York City. Le directeur en est le professeur J. J. Champenois.

⁵ Sorbonne, Paris, est une adresse suffisante.

⁶ Le semestre d'hiver va du 1^{er} novembre au 1^{er} mars et le semestre d'été du 1^{er} mars au 1^{er} juillet.

Professés par nos maîtres les plus renommés, ils comportent trois séries de conférences sur la littérature française, une sur l'histoire de la langue française, une sur la géographie de la France, quatre sur l'histoire de la France, des idées françaises et de l'art français. Tout étranger peut, à toute époque de l'année, se faire inscrire aux cours de Civilisation Française sans avoir à présenter de titres ou diplômes universitaires, sur la simple présentation d'une pièce d'identité (passeport, bulletin de baptême, etc.) A la fin du semestre, les étudiants étrangers peuvent se présenter à un examen de fin d'études. Il est délivré aux étudiants qui subissent l'examen avec succès un Diplôme d'Études de Civilisation Française. Le diplôme est délivré sans frais. Il a dès à présent une valeur réelle et il y a tout lieu d'admettre que sa valeur n'ira qu'en s'affirmant.

Enfin—symptôme important—nos Universités commencent enfin à se préoccuper du bien-être matériel des étudiants qui se confient à elles.

Il y a peu d'années encore, l'Université était d'une magnifique indifférence en ces matières; que ses étudiants et étudiantes dormissent dans une cave ou dans un grenier, que leurs chambres eussent de l'air et de la clarté ou qu'elles n'en eussent point, que cette jeunesse studieuse mangeât une nourriture saine ou malsaine, peu lui importait: l'Université était là pour dispenser le haut enseignement, le pur enseignement, et rien de plus.

A present—et ce pour une part grâce à l'exemple donné par l'American University Union⁷—nos Universités et notamment la Sorbonne se rendent compte que c'est bien à elles qu'il appartient d'assurer à ses hôtes des gîtes hygiéniques et à bon compte. Un comité de dames—beaucoup d'entre elles femmes ou filles de professeurs—a organisé un service de logement et de patronage de l'étudiante qui fonctionne au Bureau des Renseignements. Toutes les chambres inscrites ont été dûment visitées par ces dames et l'on peut être sûr qu'elles remplissent toutes les conditions imposées par l'hygiène moderne.

Le prix de la vie est actuellement assez élevé à Paris et en province . . . pour des bourses françaises. Mais, pour un Américain qui vit sur de l'argent américain, le prix de la vie restera sensiblement plus bas qu'aux Etats-Unis tant que le dollar vaudra

⁷ Rue de Fleurus, Paris (tout près du jardin du Luxembourg).

dans les douze ou quatorze francs. Pour l'étudiante, la pension, dans des maisons visitées par le Comité des Dames, va de 170 francs (\$12.50) par mois à 450 francs (\$32). Pour l'étudiant, la chambre, dans une famille honorable, coûte de 100 à 150 francs par mois (\$7 à \$11). Les repas, dans un restaurant modeste, coûtent huit francs (60 cents) par jour. Une vie plus large représenterait une dépense de 600 francs par mois au minimum (environ \$44). De plus, un restaurant coopératif fondé par les étudiants, fonctionne au Siège de leur Association.

A toute cette liste de progrès réalisés, il conviendrait d'ajouter la création à Fontainebleau, dans le beau palais de François 1^{er}, d'un véritable Conservatoire de musique, ouvert chaque été pour les étrangers, et où seules professent les sommités du monde musical parisien; il conviendrait aussi de signaler la reprise ou l'établissement prochain de cours d'été aux Universités de Grenoble, de Rennes, de Montpellier, de Bordeaux, de Toulouse, etc., de rappeler la fondation récente de bourses d'études exclusivement attribuées à de jeunes Américaines, dans nos meilleurs lycées de jeunes filles (Jules Ferry à Paris, Versailles, Caen, Tours).

Mais nous en avons assez dit pour que le lecteur soit orienté sur les tendances nouvelles qui se font actuellement jour dans le monde universitaire français.

Les Universités de notre pays s'adaptent avec une énergie non démentie aux besoins du monde moderne, à ceux surtout de la clientèle étrangère, et nous croyons en toute bonne foi que M. Bush a raison quand il conclut son intéressant article sur *Les Soldats Américains dans les Universités Françaises* par ces déclarations catégoriques:

"The French administrations are ready to go half way to meet Americans and know how to help them to take advantage of what is found in each university. With their sense of order and precision, their love of clearness, their instinct for all that is artistic, their high intellectual gifts, added to their present understanding of Americans, the French professors have something to give to the future American student in France."

The University of Chicago

THE REAL KNOWLEDGE OF A FOREIGN COUNTRY (Continued)

By LILIAN L. STROEBE

CONSTITUTION, ADMINISTRATION, NEWSPAPERS, PERIODICALS

Closely related to the study of history is the study of the constitution and the administration of the foreign country. A short but clear and satisfactory outline of the constitutions of France, Germany (as it was) and Spain can be found in the valuable little books *French Daily Life*; *German Daily Life*; *Spanish Daily Life* (Newson's Modern Language Series, New York). For a general survey and for a comparison with American conditions these outlines are quite sufficient. Each country has achieved some particularly good features in legislation that ought to be studied more in detail, for instance Germany has done pioneer work in labor legislation and one recitation might well be spent on the study of the three compulsory insurance laws, insurance against accidents, insurance against illness and insurance against invalidism and old age.

In connection with the constitution and administration, the students ought to learn about the different political parties of the foreign country, their aims and their ideals, their party platforms and their party slogans. It is not very easy to find clear descriptions of the political parties in the foreign language, as the information is either too technical, presupposing too much knowledge on the part of the reader, or it is written for the purpose of propaganda and therefore is too one-sided, so very likely the instructor will have to give a little talk on the subject, telling the students what they ought to know. It is only after the students have studied the political parties that they will really understand the newspapers of the foreign country, as a very large part of the space, even in the non-political newspapers, is given over to the discussion of internal politics, so the reading and studying of foreign newspapers, and later on of periodicals, might profitably find a place in this part of the course. A few introductory words

about the different ways in which news is gathered in Europe will be necessary: the difference between the Associated Press and the big European Agencies, like Havas for France, Wolff for Germany, etc. might be briefly explained. Then students are to look carefully over a few copies of the most important newspapers of the foreign country under discussion: for instance, *Le Temps*, *Le Matin*, *Le Figaro*, *Le Gaulois* for France; *Das Berliner Tageblatt*, *Die Münchner Allgemeine Zeitung*, *Die Kölner Zeitung*, *Die Frankfurter Zeitung*, for Germany; *La Epoca*, *El Nacional*, *El Correo*, *El Español* for Spain; *La Nacion* of Buenos Aires, *El Mercurio* of Chile, *La Lucha* of Cuba, etc. After having read those papers students will be able to answer questions like the following: How is the material arranged as compared with the large American newspapers? Comparatively how much space is given to the politics of the country, how much to political events of foreign countries? What sort of news is printed about arts and science, theatre, sport, crimes, scandals? What about the advertisements, the local news, the news of the stock exchange and commerce, etc?

While staying in a foreign country the careful reading of the daily papers is one of the best means of gaining a good knowledge of the foreign ways, but I find that for students in the United States the reading of periodicals is perhaps of more lasting value. It is impossible to get the daily papers quickly and regularly; all the articles are written for the passing moment and lose much when read weeks after the event. Of course, there are foreign newspapers printed in this country, but almost all of them are only a translation—and usually a very poor translation—of American newspapers, so their value for any one who wants to study the conditions of a foreign country is very small.

Among the seven thousand periodicals to which the Public Library in New York subscribes, all the most important periodicals of France, Germany, Spain and South America can be found and a few hours of work there, choosing the best ones for class use, will amply repay the instructor, who has not had the chance of studying those publications carefully in the foreign country.

Very few colleges have money enough to subscribe to many important and interesting foreign periodicals, but two or three of the most representative ones should be found in every library.

It is very easy for the instructor and costs practically no money to procure a few sample copies and back numbers of almost all the good foreign publications of that kind. In that way, the students will be able to see and study all the best and most representative periodicals of the foreign country under discussion. They will learn to understand their scope and their special features. They will learn to compare them with American periodicals of the same type, and they may even learn to understand the jokes in the comic papers.

Many excellent periodicals are published in France, which the students should know and appreciate. *La Revue des deux Mondes* and *Le Mercure de France* are well known monthlies, *La Revue de Paris* and *La Nouvelle Revue* are issued twice a month. These are all intended for the educated classes. In addition to novels, short stories and poems, they publish articles written by the best authors on all the interesting questions in politics, literature and art. *La Revue Hebdomadaire*, *Je sais tout*, *L'Illustration* are good weeklies of a similar character. The latter is beautifully illustrated and is especially interesting on account of its literary supplement which prints the best modern dramas.

There are several good German monthlies which give articles of general interest and novels of the best modern writers: for instance, *Die Deutsche Rundschau*, *Die Neue Deutsche Rundschau*, *Die Süddeutschen Monatshefte*, *Velhagen und Klasings Monatshefte*. The latter is very well illustrated. *Das Literarische Echo* is published twice monthly and contains good articles about general literary questions and reports very carefully all the important new books in German literature. *Die Woche* is a weekly, well illustrated, which contains, in addition to some good literary articles, the most important news from Germany and all other countries of the world.

There are plenty of interesting periodicals to be found in the Spanish language. A few of them are printed in New York and are intended for the Spanish speaking peoples of Central and South America. Of course they lack the real Spanish atmosphere though they may be found useful at times. We have already mentioned the *Boletín de la Union Pan-Americana*, a monthly treating wholly of America, to the exclusion of Spain. *La Revista del Mundo* is the Spanish edition of "The World's Work" and

La Revista Universal is the Spanish edition of "The Pictorial Review."

Spain is especially well supplied with good weeklies, mostly published in Madrid. We have already mentioned *La Esfera* on account of its excellent illustrations. *España* is a good record of political, social and literary events. *Blanco y Negro*, *Nuevo Mundo*, *Nuestro Tiempo* are also well illustrated and are intended for the general educated public; they contain articles of all kinds, short stories, poems, etc.

Students find it much easier to discuss newspapers and periodicals from some definite point of view and after having finished a general survey of the subject, a few practical talks and topics in which the students have to condense their information will be helpful. For instance: You have five dollars to spend on French or German or Spanish periodicals. Which ones would you choose and why? Compare them with American periodicals of the same type. Write a letter to a friend and tell him that you are going to subscribe to one foreign (German or French or Spanish) periodical, and suggest that he should subscribe to one you mention, and then you can exchange them. Explain to him in detail the reasons why you chose the two periodicals, and inform him about other possibilities. A book agent comes to your house and wishes you to subscribe to a particular French or German or Spanish periodical. Give the conversation between yourself and the book agent. What will the book agent say in order to arouse your interest in this periodical and what reasons will he give you for his conviction that you cannot afford to miss such a wonderful opportunity.

EDUCATION

The students certainly ought to have a general idea about the educational system, the organization of schools and universities of the foreign country and some more detailed information about points of special interest for Americans or for future teachers. A general short outline ought to precede the detailed study; for France, Germany and Spain a good short survey of a few pages can be found in the useful little books already mentioned, *French Daily Life*, *German Daily Life*, *Spanish Daily Life* (Newson's Modern Language Series). The study of the educational system again affords a good opportunity for a geographical review.

Students will have to remember their maps showing the seventeen educational districts of France, or the twenty-two university cities of Germany, or the ten universities of Spain and those of South America. The French system of education is absolutely centralized, so it is comparatively easy for the students to get a clear idea of the underlying principles. In Germany each separate state has its own educational system, but there is very little difference and it is therefore quite correct to speak of the educational system of Germany. Though the Spanish universities played a most important part in the intellectual life of Europe in the middle ages, neither Spain nor South America has contributed very much to the advancement of education in modern times, and not very much study will have to be spent on these countries. Again students must have access to the original sources of information. In France and Germany each of the higher grades of schools issue every year circulars containing the course of study, the daily program, the names of the teachers, their degrees and titles, the distribution of class work and similar information. The college ought to own a number of those catalogues which have been issued within the last ten years, but it is not necessary to have the new ones every year, as the changes usually are very unimportant. Whereas these programs are quite meaningless to those who do not understand the general system, they contain a great deal of illuminating information for those who can read them, and with the help of the instructor students will be able to obtain from them valuable information on all important points. A comparison with American conditions is the best way to find out whether the students have gained a clear idea of the foreign system. The general question could be: How does the American system of public schools compare with that of France, of Germany? What useful lessons—if any—relating to public school education and university system might be learned from those countries? Why has the democratic party in France and especially in Germany lately advocated very strongly the establishment of the American system (called *Einheitsschule* in Germany)? What are the advantages of the American system over the French, the German one? What are the disadvantages? The most important innovation in the American system within the last ten years has been the establishment of the Junior High School: to what degree

does the French, the German school system incorporate the ideas which led to the establishment of the Junior High School in this country? In a general way the freshman and sophomore year at an American college might be compared to the two last years of a French lycée or a German Gymnasium. After having studied "*Plan d'études et programme d'enseignement dans les lycées et collèges de garçons*," let the students compare the number of recitation hours, the number of subjects studied, the possibility of elective work, the amount of freedom and spare time and many other points of interest of the foreign school with a good American city high school. They will certainly find out for themselves that a French boy of seventeen or eighteen is harder worked and has less freedom than a young American of the same age in the corresponding type of school.

Again the practical application of the theoretical knowledge will help the students very much to clarify their ideas on the subject. They might be asked to describe in detail the education which children in the different strata of society are likely to receive in France, Germany, or Spain. How much schooling will the son of a poor factory worker receive? What is he likely to attain in life, unless he is exceptionally gifted? What education is the son of a small peasant, who will inherit his father's farm, likely to receive? Or the son of a small shopkeeper, an under-official, a government employee, a schoolteacher, an army officer?

The majority of the students who elect a course of this kind are prospective teachers of modern languages and for them some knowledge of the preparation of teachers and especially of the preparation of teachers of modern languages abroad is very important. The study of this particular subject also gives a good insight into the university system of the foreign country. The government regulations and reports about the qualification of teachers should be studied carefully and compared with the systems or lack of systems in the different states of the Union. Students will find out for themselves that, for instance, French teachers of modern languages are better prepared and better equipped for their career than most of their American colleagues. A good topic, that might be worked out in connection with this special subject, would be: Which points of the French system of training teachers of modern languages are especially good and

how could these requirements be adapted to American conditions? How is it that the French teachers of modern languages have a very high professional standard and how could the professional standard among American modern language teachers be raised? It is very easy to find topics for shorter talks in the class room, for instance; Monsieur X. is a French exchange professor at an American college and he gives a little talk in the French club about his school and university years and his professional life. The students are to give this talk with explanations in such a way that college sophomores who know nothing about French education can understand what Monsieur X. is talking about. The first student could speak about his school days, the second about his university years and the third about his special professional training.

After having studied the geography of the foreign country, the students planned a summer's trip and a whole year's itinerary in the foreign country. Now after having studied the educational system, they are to lay out the work they could do abroad during one summer vacation and plan the work for a sojourn of one, two or three years. France and Spain are making great efforts to offer good summer schools where Americans can improve their knowledge of the foreign language and the foreign country and students should study those circulars carefully—always in the language of the country. This point is never to be lost sight of. A person who wants to pursue serious study at the university of Paris should consult *Littératures et Langues Romanes*, a pamphlet, published annually, in which all the courses in Romance languages and literature given in Paris are listed. Students can learn what courses are to be offered in all the German, Swiss and Austrian universities by consulting *Vorlesungsverzeichnis der Universitäten und Hochschulen Deutschlands, Deutsch-Österreichs und der Schweiz*. Such a topic, if worked out carefully and in detail, will give the students a very good idea of the points of interest and the possibilities of study in the foreign country and it will fill them with a lively desire to see for themselves all that it can offer to them.

(To be concluded)

Vassar College

Editorial Comment

A sermon makes a dull beginning, but if this one gets home we shall end the year with a song. Volume IV of the JOURNAL cost, as was to be expected, a good deal more than its predecessors. At last news from the business office, the printer had not been paid in full for the May issue, and the Business Manager had given up the hope of receiving the modest salary allowed him by the Executive Committee of the National Federation. Over against this, there was a considerable number of subscribers who had not paid up for 1919-20, and some collections from advertisers remained to be made. At best, however, the JOURNAL is barely solvent, and now is the time to come to its aid. Direct action and mass action are needed. All individual subscribers should be certain that their fees for Volumes IV and V have been paid in, either to the Business Manager or to the Secretary of their regional organization; and all regional organizations should see to it that all the modern language teachers in this territory are entered on their membership lists and pay the fees promptly. As was announced in the May issue, the subscription price is now two dollars, which, in the case of members of the regional associations, nets the JOURNAL one dollar and a half. Persons who do not belong to one of these organizations should remit two dollars directly to the Business Manager. Since it costs about ten cents a copy merely to print the JOURNAL, it is evident that the margin of safety will not be great, even at the new rate. The income for this year should, however, be sufficient to pay the printer promptly, to provide the business and editorial offices with enough clerical help so that the daily routine may go on effectively, and to pay the Business Manager the all too small remuneration that he has the right to expect.

A good many of our readers have been good enough to say that the JOURNAL has justified its existence. It is a widely known fact that American modern language teachers have never had greater need than now of combining all their energies for doing the job that lies before them. There is a wide spread interest in methods and materials of instruction. Many recruits are entering the profession under the pressure of present day needs, and there is a general cry that teaching standards are below what is demanded by the ideals of the profession and by what the public has a right to expect. The just demand by teachers for a fairer salary basis has been insistent and, in many cases, successful.

In view of the very large number of modern language teachers throughout the country and the slender ties that bind to each other the numerous city and state systems, it is only through some organ like the *JOURNAL* that members of the profession can get in contact with their colleagues in America and the world of modern language teachers generally. The *JOURNAL* belongs to the profession. It has no other excuse for being. Its contributors have given freely to the cause of their best thought and wisest counsel. There is every prospect that the articles will grow finer in quality and more fertile in suggestiveness and interest. The editors hope and believe that their colleagues throughout the country would disapprove vigorously of any backward step at this stage in the history of the publication. Let the modest budget be assured by a few moments of attention to the necessary details on the part of each subscriber and by the vigorous co-operation of each regional executive, and the *JOURNAL* will go forward strongly toward its goal.

The following communication from a zealous and active high school teacher is significant. It indicates a partial explanation, at least, for the regrettable and often repeated assertion that our language teachers are poorly prepared both from the standpoint of mastery of language and of ability to stimulate the interest of their pupils in language study.

"I studied French for 2 years (1897-99) in a prep. school, translation and the rules of grammar, without drill in pronunciation or oral practice or any sort of composition. When a freshman in college (1903) I joined a class of juniors who were reading, I think, Corneille and Racine. During my course I studied French whenever it was possible, but the time, quite drearily spent, seems now nearly wasted. In my senior year we read, I remember, 19th century authors. We used English constantly in class, read two or three books each term—there were then three terms in the college year—and as many books outside, in which we had written examinations in English. We wrote much composition from the larger Fraser and Squair, but I remember no other composition text and no free composition at all. No oral practice, no one in that class could have acquired any facility of speech. We studied—also in English—a history of French literature. All that I know which is real and useful has been acquired since college days. . . . My most helpful work was done at—Language School. In 19— during two weeks in June, two days in September, and four days in October I took thirty lessons in pronunciation from Miss ——. The work was most intensive. I took two and even three hours a day and practiced fully half of the rest of the

time. The result was a transformed pronunciation. . . . The joy and confidence that this transformation caused reacted on my pupils last year."

Some years ago an article by Dr. Wm. R. Price in the *School Review* presented a distressing group of documents on this subject, and the question at once arose: What are we going to do about it? If Dr. Price's article seemed to throw on the teachers themselves the onus of responsibility for lamentable deficiencies, the passage quoted above very evidently places it elsewhere, and in doing so points the way to at least a partial remedy. Our correspondent had poor instruction in secondary school, but her chief grievance is against the classes in college, where despite her almost pathetic eagerness in the study of French, her time was "quite dreadfully spent and now seems nearly wasted." That she was no slacker nor lacking in ambition is shown by the rest of her story. Not content with her equipment, she continued her efforts to better it, and found that in *thirty lessons* her pronunciation could be so improved as to give new zest and confidence to her teaching. Like so many others, she had dragged on through school and college and the first years of teaching, impelled by an instinctive interest in her subject, but conscious, apparently, of the hollowness of her claims in certain very important particulars to a teaching equipment in French. There are hundreds of teachers who are quite aware that they can not pronounce nor understand nor speak the language in which they give instruction with any reasonable degree of confidence, and this knowledge is a "mental hazard" that plays havoc in the school room. During their school and college preparation they have had few or none of the kinds of exercise that develop to some extent the sense of being at home in the language, and many of them never surmount this handicap. Either they lack the mental curiosity and restlessness of spirit that drives them to take the decisive "thirty lessons" or they develop bad habits that nothing short of the most heroic treatment can overcome.

The responsibility, then, for the training of competent language teachers rests, in the last analysis, chiefly on the colleges and universities, and conditions in this field will not improve rapidly—we believe they are improving—until the modern language departments indicate their awareness of the truth of this by no means novel assertion by considering what they may do to keep the vicious circle of imperfectly trained teachers producing imperfectly trained freshman classes from going on forever. College men inveigh continually against the poor preparation of entering language students, and there is too often rich justification for their complainings. But their own withers are not unwrung. We venture the assertion that many hundreds of modern language teachers, if they got up in an experience meeting,

would have a story strangely resembling that of our correspondent. It would not be just the middle-aged ones either, as we know from observation. Many college graduates of this decade would tell as sad—and as heartening—a tale, and many of the next decade will repeat the indictment.

The school or college language department that turns out graduates who have had little or no training in pronunciation, little or no practice in hearing and in trying to speak the language studied is guilty of neglect of duty, which, in the case of graduates who expect to teach, becomes more than a sin of omission. There may be still some college teachers who take the delightfully simple and easy position that the task of acquiring ear and tongue training is entirely the student's responsibility. Since it is generally admitted that unavoidable conditions make it very, very difficult to impart a really excellent pronunciation and almost impossible to develop real ease of written and oral expression in the case of a given class, is it not better, they ask, to work on something definite—grammar, translation from and into the foreign language, history of literature, and to say frankly to all would-be teachers: "We can not give you a satisfactory training in the other aspects of language learning. Go where you can be among the people, and you will acquire the other things in half the time and twice as accurately"? Even if this last statement were quite true, the general position is unsound. It is indisputable that very, very few people gain an easy command of a foreign language without direct and fairly prolonged contact with some group that uses the language in normal intercourse. On the other hand it is just as undeniable that the proper kind of teaching, in school or in college, can, and often does, produce graduates who have a good pronunciation, with some feeling for intonation, who understand readily Frenchmen or Spaniards or Germans, as the case may be, who can use easily the language of the classroom and can even converse with a foreigner, and who can write with correctness, if not with ease of idiom and elegance of expression. To be sure, these are the best, but as few students become teachers of a subject for which they have not a special aptitude and a particular interest, it may be fairly assumed of a given college class that those who plan to teach languages are capable, if given a chance, of closely approaching the standard outlined above. If this is the case, the conclusion is self-evident. A three or four year language course in college, neglecting for the sake of our argument the language history in secondary school, should be so devised that a student of good language ability who finishes it may reasonably be expected to pronounce well enough to be easily intelligible to a native, to understand the language when carefully spoken by a native, to read without consciously translating, and to write a

letter or a brief theme in perfectly intelligible style and without many mistakes of grammar and idiom.

If college and university teachers all over the country will but accept these statements as being in accord with facts, and will see to it that their *agenda* for this year's classes take account of them, the effects will be manifest some five years hence in the decreasing number of such *documents* as the one that caused this editorial outburst.

Our readers will not misunderstand. They will not assume that we should like to see all language chairs filled by Sprachmeistern; that we would eliminate all courses in English in which the intellectual and artistic achievement of the foreign country is critically examined; that we consider success in the formation of new linguistic habits as the only valid test of achievement in modern language study. Such an assumption would be ill-founded. We simply mean to say that the chief burden of preparing capable teachers of languages rests today, as in the past, on the colleges, that with European travel so costly and troublesome, it is more difficult than formerly for college teachers to shift their obligation to give proper attention to all aspects of language teaching, and that unless our language departments concern themselves seriously with this pressing duty, we shall look in vain for the training of the great multitude of secondary school pupils to be any better in the future than in the past. We have talked proudly since 1916 of our opportunities; it is time to examine searchingly our obligations and to see that the fulfilment of them is largely in our own hands.

Notes and News

NATIONAL BUREAU OF EDUCATIONAL CORRESPONDENCE

During June and July, the National Peabody Foundation for French-American Educational Correspondence, co-operating with the French Minister of Education, has conducted an official lecture tour of publicity throughout the educational institutions of France. In this capacity Dr. André Béziat of Vanderbilt University and Professor André Allix, official lecturer of the Alliance Française 1919-20, have visited French cities in order to obtain enrolments of French students, especially of French girl students. The three thousand American girl students who during the last school year failed to receive their assignments of French girl correspondents, will receive such correspondents immediately after the opening of the American schools this fall. The teachers of the above classes of students may inform the Bureau as to when their schools open, otherwise these assignments will be sent late in September.

One hundred thousand French enrolments are anticipated by the end of October.

The principal schools of fourteen central and South American countries have been approached officially for co-operation in the Spanish-American correspondence. Assignments of Spanish-American correspondents will be sent out in October.

The work of the Bureau has been extended to the higher institutions in France, and American college and university students may now be put in touch with suitable correspondents.

All American instructors in institutions where correspondence with French and Spanish students is being carried on should warn their pupils that letters for France and Spain need a five cent stamp. Some French students have complained that their correspondents over here put on only a two cent stamp, which makes considerable trouble for them.

To secure greater correlation between the intermediate and the high schools, a "Council on Modern Foreign Languages for Intermediate Schools" has been recently organized in Boston. This council is composed of the heads of the departments of modern foreign languages in the several high schools, together with representative teachers in the intermediate elementary schools.

Under the able leadership of Mr. William B. Snow, sub-committees have already been appointed to consider and report on courses of study, text-books, and kindred subjects.

Such a committee should be productive of good results, especially along the line of eliminating waste and standardizing requirements.

NINTH SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING OF THE NEW JERSEY
MODERN LANGUAGE TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION,
NEWARK, MAY 1, 1920

In a paper dealing with the Improvement of the Teaching of Spanish, Mr. Lawrence A. Wilkins of New York laid special stress upon:

The adoption of a new aim which seeks to lay a firm foundation for the use of the modern language in any and all the ways a language is used, not primarily and chiefly in the development of reading ability;

A simplification of the work in reading so that, first, a smaller number of texts may be used in the first year or year and a half of the high-school course, and, secondly, that the classics may be altogether removed from the high-school course. Less of *Polyeucte* and more of *Pollyanna*;

The use of more of the *realia*, the facts and real things of Spain and Spanish America;

The elimination from our classes of those without linguistic ability, this elimination to be effected by carefully prepared prognosis and predetermination tests;

The organization of the school program, so that language teachers may have but four periods a day of class recitation;

The limitation of first year classes to thirty pupils;

Better pay for teachers, including more dollars, more appreciation and esteem by boards of education, and the sabbatical year for study abroad;

The need of a changed attitude by many in authority towards Spanish, resulting in a realization of the importance of the language, of the fact that Spanish is not "easy" either to learn or to teach, that it should be taught for more important reasons than that it is a "practical" language, useful in commerce.

In conclusion, all attempts to improve our teaching should have, as their one supreme intent, not the making of Spaniards or Spanish-Americans, but the making of sturdy, competent citizens of the United States.

In the discussion that followed the assertion was made that our high-school aims in modern language teaching could be still further simplified. The one objective that our high-school courses *can* attain and that is productive of immediately useful results is the ability to read the foreign language with ease and

comfort. This does not mean that all our efforts, or even a considerable proportion of them, must be confined to translation. Nothing could be worse than spending a large part of our classroom time in translation. Real reading knowledge is most rapidly achieved thru regular, persistent and systematic oral and aural drill in the commonplaces of the language. This drill must be lively and energetic, should be supplemented by written work and regular practice in applying the knowledge thus acquired in reading. In this way the pupil is not only enabled to acquire a good reading knowledge in the shortest possible time, but he is also prepared adequately for continued progress in understanding, speaking and writing.

Professor Percy A. Chapman of Princeton University, speaking for Princeton, dealt with some common misconceptions on the part of high-school teachers with regard to college entrance requirements. There is a long-standing complaint of high-school teachers to the effect that they are at a disadvantage as compared with certain private school teachers in the matter of training pupils for entrance to college, particularly in modern languages, because college requirements are at variance with the courses approved by the high schools, which are intended to develop a speaking knowledge and a certain familiarity with the history and customs of the country the language of which is being studied.

Princeton regrets this situation extremely, if it exists, as Princeton is very anxious to have as many high-school graduates as possible among its students. Moreover, the modern language courses offered at Princeton are all given with a view to literary training, and it is impossible to find time in them to teach the spoken language or history and customs other than incidentally. Princeton is therefore trying by its requirements to leave as much liberty as possible to the schools, testing candidates rather on what they have actually done than on any prescribed course of study, and is emphasizing the importance of the spoken language by the introduction of oral and aural tests as a part of its entrance examinations.

It is hoped that these measures will remove any disadvantages that may have been in the way of high-school students who wished to come to Princeton. The University further hopes that high-school teachers will realize the desire of its officers and faculty to assist them in any way possible, and will not hesitate to call upon them for information or advice.

Mr. William Milwitzky of the Barringer High School, Newark, exhibited some excellent posters issued by the French railways, and made some valuable suggestions as to their use in the classroom as a basis for oral and composition work. It is expected

that Mr. Milwitzky may be able at some future meeting to deal in greater detail with the subject of *realia* in French.

EDWARD FRANKLIN HAUCH,
Acting President

*Rutgers College,
New Brunswick, N. J.*

The Kansas Modern Language Association held its first general annual meeting in Topeka on April 24. The keen interest manifested by the teachers from all over the state who were in attendance augurs well for the future of language instruction in Kansas. The morning session was devoted to Round Table Conferences of the various modern language groups, while the afternoon was given over to a general session of the Association as a whole.

The following is the program of the meeting:

9:30 A. M.

Round Table Conferences

French

Chairman, Ethel Vaughan, Kansas City, Kansas, High School,
Vice-President for French.

Discussion of Text-books in View of State Adoption.

Spanish

Chairman, Samuel J. Pease, State Manual Training Normal
School, Vice-President for Spanish.

Discussion of Text-books in View of State Adoption.

German

Chairman, John V. Cortelyou, Kansas State Agricultural College,
Vice-President for German.

A Survey of the Teaching of German in Kansas—Elmer F. Engel,
University of Kansas.

2:00 P. M.

General Session

Chairman, Eugénie Galloo, University of Kansas, President.
Election of Officers.

Kansas Modern Language Association Publicity—Lillian Dudley,
Kansas State Normal School, Chairman of Publicity Committee.

The Correlation of the Work in Modern Languages in the Junior
High School with that in the Senior High School and in the
College—Kate L. Riggs, Lawrence High School.

A New Aid to a Practical Vocabulary—John A. Hess, University
of Kansas.

The Foreign Language Clubs as Auxiliaries to Class-room
Work—Alpha L. Owens, Baker University.

4:00 P. M.

South America Today (illustrated lecture)—David L. Patterson, Professor of European History, University of Kansas.

Officers of the Association for the year 1920-21 are:

President, John V. Cortelyou, Kansas State Agricultural College.

Vice-President for French, Marjorie Rickard, Fort Scott High School.

Vice-President for Spanish, Velma Shelley, El Dorado High School.

Vice-President for German, Theodore W. Todd, Washburn College.

Secretary-Treasurer, Amida Stanton, University of Kansas.

The senior class of Bethlehem (Penn.) high school presented on May 4th last a Spanish play arranged by them entitled "La heredera de mi tía." The play was written and staged under the directorship of Mr. Allen V. Laub, instructor in Spanish in the high school.

Notice to Members of the Association of Modern Language Teachers of the Central West and South and other Teachers:

This Association has had the report of the committee on syllabi mimeographed at considerable expense and now stands ready to furnish copies of the French and German syllabi, gratis, to all applying for them. The Spanish Syllabus will be published in the JOURNAL. The Syllabi should be of value to all teachers. In applying, please enclose a two-cent stamp. Address:

C. H. HANDSCHIN, *Sec'y-Treas.*
Oxford, Ohio.

NOTICE

Members of the Modern Language Teachers' Association of the Central West and South will please note that the October number of THE MODERN LANGUAGE JOURNAL will be sent to all last year's members. However, all subscriptions not paid by the time the November JOURNAL is mailed will be cancelled. Please note also the advance in the fee from \$1.50 to \$2.00 per year. Members are therefore requested to remit by November 15th at the latest to the undersigned.

This new regulation is necessary since numerous subscriptions have to date remained unpaid. Some assert that they did not receive the JOURNAL, others state that they did not consider themselves subscribers. The result is that our finances are not in satisfactory condition. The new regulation is intended to remedy this.

C. H. HANDSCHIN, *Sec'y-Treas.*

A member of the editorial board who has been visiting a number of schools and universities in Switzerland and Italy writes: "The two things which have struck me in the schools I have attended have been the old fashioned methods of teaching the languages, almost all by translation and grammar, and the solid position German has retained here. It is still taught in all the higher schools with English as an alternative, and tho the classes have become smaller during the war, they have by no means disappeared. Nowhere in France, Italy or Switzerland have I seen any hint of a movement toward the introduction of Spanish; even the universities do not offer it in any form. French is taught in all the higher schools in Italy, but in the earlier classes, German or English being given four years at the end of the modern course in the *liceo*, the school which directly feeds the university. Those taking Greek have only French as a modern language."

Our readers know, of course, that much interest is taken in Spanish in certain French universities, especially at Montpellier, and that Spanish is taught in some of the *lycées*, at any rate. The managing editor attended a very interesting class at the *lycée* of Bordeaux in 1915.

Professor Laurence M. Riddle of the Romance department of the University of Southern California is spending a sabbatical year in study at Johns Hopkins University. Professor Riddle was made an "officier d'Académie" and decorated with the academic palms by the French government in recognition of his services on behalf of the Alliance Française of Los Angeles. Professor H. A. Austin, who has been for a number of years in the Romance department of the University of Michigan, will have charge of the department during Professor Riddle's absence.

Lander McClintock, instructor in French at Swarthmore College, has been appointed to an assistant professorship in the University of Indiana.

The following visiting professors gave courses in the Romance department of the University of Chicago during the summer quarter:

M. A. Buchanan, University of Toronto, D. H. Carnahan, University of Illinois, Albert Léon Guérard, Rice Institute, Antonio Heras y Zamorano, University of Minnesota, Raffaello Piccoli, University of Pisa, M. A. Colton, U. S. Naval Academy, F. E. Guyer, Dartmouth College, R. T. Hill, Yale University, E. R. Sims, University of Texas.

Mr. Louis Allen, instructor in the Romance department of Illinois, has accepted an assistant professorship at the State University of Oklahoma.

Professor Marian P. Whitney of Vassar, one of the editors of the *JOURNAL*, spent the spring and summer in Europe visiting France, Italy and other countries.

Professor Albert Schinz of Smith College, whose recent book on French war literature has just appeared, returned from Europe recently after a six months' stay.

The Spanish department of Cornell University gave a "velada literario-musical" on July 30 under the direction of Professor H. G. Doyle, aided by Messrs. Hespelt, Sherwell, Arratia, Mrs. Morrison, and Miss Catherine Lowe. In addition to Spanish dances by Mrs. Morrison and Miss Seidman and Spanish songs, two short plays were given, one of them a "Chascarillo en acción" of Jacinto Benavente, and the other a "juguete comico" of Luis Cocat and H. Criado.

Olin H. Moore, who went to Northwestern University last autumn as associate professor in the Romance department, has accepted a professorship at Ohio State University.

B. M. Woodbridge, who was called to Rice Institute two years ago from the University of Texas, returns this autumn to Austin as professor of French.

Reviews

CUENTOS DE LA AMÉRICA ESPAÑOLA. Selected and edited with Notes and Vocabulary, by ALFRED COESTER, PH.D. Ginn & Company, Boston, 1920. V+236 pages (136 text, 21 notes, 76 vocabulary).

Professor Coester's book is the first collection of Spanish-American short stories to be published for school use, though a few have been included in "readers," or incorporated in collections of Spanish stories. The tales are suitable for third year in high school and second year in college. Since the recent awakening of interest in Spanish-American countries the tendency has been to emphasize the so-called "practical" by the publication of constructed material descriptive of these countries, or to teach their history by excerpts from Mitre, Vicuña Mackenna, etc. Professor Coester says in his preface: "Stories afford the best material for the study of colloquial speech, as well as for oral and reproductive exercises. Stories better sustain class interest than pseudo-travels or extracts from newspapers and histories." This is a psychological fact well-known to anyone who has tried to induce classes to read descriptions of battles and marches, or who has struggled through some of the travel dialogues above-mentioned. Moreover, many of the latter are anything but colloquial and do not teach Spanish as it actually exists.

A knowledge of Spanish-American history is certainly worth while, but its study furnishes a very poor medium for instruction in Spanish conversation. A student who lands in Buenos Aires will scarcely find it necessary to discuss the splendid heroism of San Martín, nor the political issues of Federalists and Unitarians, though he may wish to know how to manipulate a *bombilla* if he is invited to partake of the classic *mate*. As Professor Coester says further, stories, especially those of present-day life, will put the student in closer touch with local customs than anything else he can read. A foreigner studying English and contemplating a trip to the United States, may be thoroughly familiar with the story of Washington crossing the Delaware or the dramatic episode of Lee's surrender, and arrive in New York an utter stranger to every phase of American life and even unable to make himself understood in an ordinary restaurant. So the Spanish student may have read with interest a description of San Martín's heroic crossing of the Andes or the story of his famous interview with Bolívar and know absolutely nothing of the people he will meet in South America. The first story in Professor Coester's

book, *Cómo se formaban los caudillos* by Mansilla, will interest a student in the man Rosas, when he would be bored by a chapter from any history however well-written, and the bald statement "ejerció durante 24 años una sangrienta dictadura" (from a recent reader) would be forgotten the next day. Next to a personal acquaintance, the best way to know the people of any country is through the literary productions of their own writers.

Professor Coester's volume contains seventeen selections, representing nine different countries. The selections are well chosen with reference to diversity of style and to local color. Some of the leading writers of the several countries are included, such as Ricardo Palma, Blanco-Fombona, Señora Matto de Turner, Rubén Darío and Manuel Fernández Juncos. Others are of lesser note, some too recent to be well-known outside of their respective localities—Viana, for example, who is undoubtedly one of Uruguay's most talented writers. Mexico fares rather badly. The short story has been much in vogue in that country for over a half-century, and Mexico's greatest novelists have made excursions into that field. With a list of great names including Altamirano, Rafael Delgado, Portillo y Rojas, Federico Gamboa and Amado Nervo, it seems rather unfortunate to select as the sole representative of Mexico's great literature, a comparatively unknown journalist of over sixty years ago. Romero's little story *Anita* is interesting, however, and typical of the romanticism of his times, if not of the Mexico of to-day. It may be questioned whether anything is gained by retaining the Chilean spelling in the last selection (*Juan Fariña* by Baldomero Lillo). It is easily read after one knows Spanish, and may prove only needlessly puzzling to a high school or college student.

Cuentos de la América Española is excellent from a mechanical point of view, and the illustrations, both photographs and drawings, are well-suited to the text. A map of *La América Latina* precedes the notes. (Why not some other term? Perhaps Professor Coester endorses this, but some of us are fighting hard to keep our students from using "Latin America," though, with most departments of history against us, it bids fair to be a losing fight). The vocabulary is complete; the notes appreciative and entirely adequate, covering all historical and geographical references, as well as translating many difficult idioms. The text is remarkably free from typographical errors. In fact, the book is one of the very best edited texts with which we have been favored recently and it is welcome. It is to be hoped that it will encourage the study of the life and customs of the countries of Spanish America through their literatures, rather than by means of the more or less stilted texts constructed by American teachers.

CHARLES A. TURRELL

University of Arizona,
Tucson

EASY SPANISH READER. HATHEWAY AND BERGE-SOLER.
XI+386 pp. The Macmillan Co., New York, 1919.

The book is intended by its authors for secondary schools and is designed to meet their needs; that is to say, the need for a large amount of very easy reading material based on the experiences of every-day life. This is sound psychologically and practically as easy material lends itself to rapid reading, repetition and drill; a large amount of material fixes impressions; and material based on every-day life makes a vivid appeal to the child mind. The authors have done a very striking thing in thus relating the thing to be learned to those daily activities and experiences which are of most vital interest to the high school student.

The *Easy Spanish Reader* is in fact a kind of juvenile story of American boys and girls at work and at play: a thread of narrative interspersed with sprightly dialogue and description. Country life is pictured in detail with its barn-yards, its fields, orchards and recreations; the rush of city life with its elevated railroads, hotels, parades, department stores; school life with its geometry and history lessons. Woven into this are expositions dealing with animal life, natural products, trades and industries. It will readily be seen that the book is based on things already experienced or actually being experienced by the student.

Being thus related to his natural interests and knowledge it is not surprising that the *Easy Spanish Reader* is almost entirely lacking in Spanish background. American atmosphere is apparent not only in the subject-matter but also in the language and style of the book. This, however, is largely due to the pedagogical plan underlying the reader. The authors, for instance, deliberately use the Vd. form thruout, a desirable device pedagogically speaking, but contrary to Spanish usage. Again, in the chapters on the passive voice and the progressive form of the verb their zeal in the presentation of these topics betrays them into woodenness. Here and there, too, one may notice a slight exaggeration of word and idiom. There is much to be said, however, in favor of non-Spanish subject-matter in an elementary reader. In the first place, familiar material gives the student an opportunity to concentrate on the mechanics of the language he is learning instead of scattering his efforts in an attempt to express something he does not know in a language he does not know. Furthermore, after the foundation has been laid for a grammatical command of the foreign language, based on a well balanced vocabulary, the student can in a very short time and with much less effort familiarize himself with the life and customs of the country.

In the reader under discussion we undoubtedly have a well balanced vocabulary. The language is an ingenious mixture of

the practical and the literary. The practical vocabulary—which by the way, is a most usable one—is introduced by means of a dialogue, narration and exposition; the literary, by means of description: of things, persons, animals and manners; even by vivid narration. The vocabulary is large. There are about 3500 words in the book. The constructions, however, remain simple thruout, so that the pedagogical problem resolves itself into the acquisition of vocabulary.

The book is divided into four main parts, the perennial spring, summer, autumn and winter. It has 302 pages of text divided into 49 chapters or lessons varying in length from 2 to 12 pages. The book is too long for intensive study thruout, but large parts of it can be assigned for rapid reading outside of class, or used for sight reading in class. The book is well adapted for sight reading as there is a large amount of very easy dialogue.

Accompanying each chapter is a grammar topic for emphasis or review; a *cuestionario*, and a *tema*. To call the attention of the student to the illustrations of the grammatical principle in the text the authors have had recourse to the device of printing in heavy type the word or words under consideration. The teacher will have to guard against the temptation on the part of students to emphasize such words in reading, thus destroying the rhythm of the Spanish sentence. The authors by means of these reviews stress practically the whole field of Spanish grammar with the following exceptions: the position of adjectives; the personal *a*; *pero* and *sino*; apocopation; the sequence of tenses; substitutes for the passive; the dependent subjunctive. The grammatical reviews in parts I and II are good. In part III, five chapters are devoted to the progressive form of the verb. One feels that this is unnecessary and hardly justifiable. In part IV, five chapters are devoted to the regular passive. No substitutes are introduced. Since the reflexive and impersonal forms of the verb are used more than the regular passive by all Spanish-speaking people, the authors' treatment of this subject lacks balance. The *cuestionarios* which appear at the end of the lessons consist of short, simple questions based on the text. The authors boldly launch forth with 32 questions on 2 pages of text, but later their ardour decreases, due to the increasing amount of dialogue in the text. The questions are not meant to be exhaustive, leaving the teacher free to develop further along the lines suggested. The short *tema* which follows the questions is composed of English sentences to be translated into Spanish. They do not add materially to the value of the book. It is to be regretted that the authors have not included other exercises. A variety of exercises for purposes of drill on vocabulary and grammatical forms would add greatly to the value of the reader.

The vocabulary is very complete. It gives all irregular verb forms; the articles with the nouns; a great many idiomatic expressions; and the grammatical notes. The book has no notes except those appearing in the vocabulary. The following corrections might be made in the vocabulary: p. 307, *el desnudo* translated *dash* would be clearer if translated *boldness*; p. 331, *los narices*, probably a misprint for *las narices*; p. 334, *portátil*, *step-ladder*: the necessary dash to supply *escalera* has evidently been omitted; p. 340, *graznar*, translated *gobble* should be *croak*, *cackle*; p. 347, *laborable* translated *for work* would be clearer if translated *workable*, *tillable*; p. 362, *el policia* for *policeman* is a neologism—substitute *el guardia civil*.

The reader is attractive in appearance. The print is large. Sixteen pictures illustrate the text and correlate with it. Such outstanding features as (1) simple constructions, (2) grammatical reviews, and (3) a well balanced, broad vocabulary will undoubtedly recommend the *Easy Spanish Reader* for Junior High School use.

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